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# Marxism Today

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

ANDREW ROTHSTEIN — THE SOVIET UNION IN WORLD POLITICS 1917-1963

J. R. CAMPBELL — WHAT N.E.D.C. AND LABOUR PARTY "PLANNING" MEAN

DAVID GROVE — PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS IN GHANA

DISCUSSION:

JACK DUNMAN — WHAT DOES MUSIC EXPRESS?

INFORMATION: — CHALLENGE OF MARXISM WEEK

Monthly 1/6

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# Marxism Today

Vol. 7 No. 11


CONTENTS


| | | page |
|---|---|---|
| | **Editorial Comments** ... ... | 321 |
| Andrew ROTHSTEIN | **The Soviet Union in World Politics, 1917-1963** ... ... | 325 |
| J. R. CAMPBELL | **What N.E.D.C. and Labour Party "Planning" Mean** ... | 335 |
| David GROVE | **Progress and Problems in Ghana** ... ... ... ... | 343 |
| DISCUSSION: | | |
| Jack DUNMAN | **What does Music Express?** ... | 350 |
| INFORMATION: | **Challenge of Marxism: Week of Debate and Discussion** ... | 352 |


*AMONG ARTICLES IN DECEMBER AND FORTHCOMING ISSUES*

| | |
|---|---|
| Jack COHEN | **The State of the Whole People** |
| Reuben FALBER | **The Tory Party** |
| Arnold KETTLE | **The Robbins Report** |
| Herbert APTHEKER | **The Negro Freedom Struggle in the United States** |
| Ernst FISCHER | **Art and Superstructure** |
| John LEWIS | **Marx on Alienation** |
| Stanley MITCHELL | **George Lukacs and the Historical Novel** |
| Maurice HOOKHAM | **Marxism, Sociology and Class** |


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# *Editorial Comments*

## *The Russian Miracle*

SIX years ago Andrew and Annelie Thorndike, together with the talented team of German Democratic Republic film workers who had been with them since their production of *The German Story* in 1955, began work on their most ambitious film to date—*The Russian Miracle*. It is now completed—a two-part documentary which runs for about four hours. The English version of this remarkable film received its British *Première* at the London Film Festival in October.[1]

The Thorndikes are a husband and wife team who have been working in films together since their meeting in 1950. Andrew comes of an Anglo-German family (he is a distant relative of Dame Sybil). Annelie is a teacher from the G.D.R. province of Mecklenburg.

Their work has had a profound effect on the political documentary film-work in the G.D.R. and throughout the socialist world. At first sight their method seems simple. They aim to reveal the movement of history through an assembly of archive film, old news-reels, still photographs, maps, documents and contemporary shot material.

But behind the apparent simplicity lie years of painstaking effort and research. For *The Russian Miracle* they examined no less than 350,000 feet of old archive film. They collected some 4,000 photographs and 4,000 documents (including, incidentally, the private diaries of Tsar Nicholas II). In addition to this historical material, they organised the shooting of 300,000 feet of film throughout the length and breadth of Soviet territory. Their camera teams covered something of the nature of half a million miles.

Statistics, documents, painstaking detailed research would not in themselves guarantee a work of art. But the Thorndike collective *have* produced a moving, compelling work of great beauty, an educational film in the truest sense of the word. *Collective* is the correct word here. The musical score is by Brecht's collaborator Paul Dessau (one of the G.D.R.'s greatest composers), the material has been skilfully edited by Gustave Lehmbruck.

[1] Available for hire from *Education & Television Films Ltd.*, 164 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.2. A 16 mm. version will be ready early in 1964.

## *Out of the Past*

The first part is entitled *Out of the Past*. It is framed in the story of Gagarin, the world's first spaceman. How did his journey come about?

We flash back to Lenin in Moscow in 1918; it is the first anniversary of the October Revolution. These are difficult days—war, famine, intervention, counter-revolution—the days of the Tsar, privations of workers and peasants, primitive industry, foreign exploiters, brutal police repression. We see, too, the beginnings of protest, the strike in the Lena goldfields, the early revolutionaries, the bitter ordeal of Siberian exile.

Then the Revolution sweeps all this away. What the Russian workers and people now need is peace for socialist construction. But this is precisely what the capitalist powers deny them. We see them attacked by the armies of fourteen nations—supplies and munitions are poured into the White Guard Forces—but the young, still raw, Red Army, which we see growing before our eyes, defeats them. Intervention fails. But the imperialists leave behind them a country in ruins. Its skilled workers make up one hundredth part of the population.

We hear Lenin's call. We have won the military struggle, he says, but now we have an even harder task. We must catch up and overtake the great capitalist powers in the economic field.

We see a remarkable juxtaposition of the U.S.S.R. with its primitive agriculture and industry compared to the relative economic might of America in the 1920's. We watch the first "subbotniks".

## *Into the Future*

Part one ends with Gagarin in the Red Square. "They have come a long way," says the commentator.

The second part is entitled *Into the Future*. It opens with something of a résumé of the first

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part through the life of one man, the scientist Yemelyanov, son of an illiterate carpenter, now the organiser of the most modern nuclear power station in the world.

We see the working out of the three programmes of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union—first the conquest of power; then the building of socialism; now the advance towards a communist society.

We move on a journey across the Soviet Union. We pause at Omsk. We see youngsters dancing happily before our concealed camera. We see the fantastic changes in Kazakhstan from virtual slavery to a free and happy life personalised in the life of a woman doctor. At Magnitogorsk we see the transformation from primitive sweating furnace labour to press button automation.

And from the film, again and again, emerges the key to the Russian miracle, the leadership in good days and bad, in defeat and in victory, of the Communist Party of the Soviet, the clarity of its purpose, and its support from the people.

## *Marxism after Eighty Years*

The annual Marx Memorial Lecture, organised by the Marx Memorial Library, was given this year by Andrew Rothstein, the Chairman of the Library. Entitled *Marxism After Eighty Years*, this lecture has now been published by the library.[2] In it Andrew Rothstein sets out to show that, in spite of the constant attempts over the last eighty years to prove that Marxism is irrelevant or dead, Engels was justified in his claim at Marx's funeral that "his name and his work will endure through the ages".

Rothstein shows effectively how the materialist conception of history, culminating in the basic proposition that "being determines consciousness", has been proved to be true by the actual transformation of the consciousness of the people over the last eighty years—he cites in particular Russia, Africa and India. He shows also how Marx's discovery of surplus value revealed the specific nature of capitalism and made clear its course of development. "The Marxian doctrine is all-powerful because it is true," wrote Lenin. The force of Marxist ideas in changing the world was never so apparent as it is today.

This lecture may be recommended in particular to those who have recently come into the Communist movement as an extremely telling assessment of the historical significance of Marx's works. In arranging these annual lectures, in which Marx's writings and his practical work are re-examined annually, but from different aspects, by leading Marxists, the Marx Memorial Library is doing a service to the working class. The Library itself, containing an unusually fine and varied collection of Marxist and other books and pamphlets on the working-class movement, is now exactly thirty years old. It is doing useful work as a centre of Marxist studies and deserves the support of the Labour movement.

[2] *Andrew Rothstein—Marxism after Eighty Years:* Marx Memorial Library, 1s. 6d.

## *Strike Movement in the Western World*

One of the important tests of the militancy and activity of the working class is the extent to which strikes have taken place over a considerable period of time. The capitalist newspapers very rarely make any analysis of strike statistics although these are often a more sure indication of the mood and outlook of the workers than superficial "surveys" which ask the man-in-the-street what he thinks about this, that or the other.

These thought are prompted by figures published in the September 1963 issue of *World Trade Union Movement*, the monthly review of the World Federation of Trade Unions. These figures show that the number of workers involved in strike actions in West European countries increased from 4,200,000 in 1956 to 37 million in 1961. Figures for Western Europe, United States and Japan show an increase from 13 million workers involved in strikes in 1958 to 43 million in 1962.

What is of further significance is the very high proportion of strike actions which were undertaken not for immediate economic demands but for political demands including the defence and extension of democratic and trade union rights and other political issues. In Western Europe it is estimated that whereas in 1958-9 one-third of the workers involved in strike action were engaged in political strikes, in 1961-2 the proportion was two-thirds.

These figures strongly demonstrate the growing militancy and political consciousness of the working class in the most developed capitalist countries and point to the great possibilities of developing large-scale mass actions of the workers for political objectives in the coming period. Such actions will no doubt help considerably in laying the basis for broad movements of the whole people against the big monopolies, for peace and democracy, and for the advance to socialism.

## *The Spanish War*

Recent months have brought us, from both sides of the Atlantic, a remarkable number of new books about the Spanish War of 1936-1939. The great

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majority of these have sought to show, from the historical perspective of twenty-five years, that the issues of that conflict were not clear-cut but hopelessly confused; that those who fought, and those who supported either side, had deviating motives in doing so; and that it was a hopeless struggle anyway.

The general effect common to all these "new assessments" has been to distort or ignore the magnificent heroism of the Spanish people, who stood up at the darkest hour of fascism's ascendancy, built an army out of nothing and for three years resisted the combined onslaught of Spanish fascism and reaction and the armed intervention of Hitler and Mussolini. They would like us to forget that the key to that miracle of resistance was the unity of the working class and the whole people.

How that unity was built is told in a paperback (*Spain* 1936-1939, 7s. 6d.) to be published by Lawrence & Wishart this month. An assessment by two Spanish Marxists, Jose Sandoval and Manuel Azcarate, it condenses into 250 pages the essential background, the stages and aspects of the war which exercised the greatest influence on the course of events and offers an explanation, in the words of the authors, of "how it came about that the Spanish people were able to wage this epic struggle . . . and why it was that, after three years of resistance, they were defeated".

It not only refreshes our memories with the facts set out in the clearest order. It has lessons for us today.

## *Death of Du Bois*

In any generation a mere handful of men and women become "legends in their own time", known and respected by millions in other lands and of other beliefs than their own. Such a man one of the makers of our twentieth century—died last September in his ninety-sixth year, still in harness in the cause of freedom.

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois was born in Massachussetts, a fifth generation American of Negro, Dutch and French stock, only five years after Lincoln's emancipation of the slaves. After a lifetime rich in varied achievement—he was hailed as a philosopher, poet and educator, and persecuted as a radical and a worker for peace—he died peacefully in his adopted country of Ghana, where he went in 1961 at President Nkrumah's invitation to supervise the editing of the *Encyclopaedia Africana*.

From his early days as a student at the Negro Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, Du Bois took as his theme the Negro struggle for freedom in all its aspects. After graduation in 1888 he went to Harvard and was awarded a doctorate of philosophy for a thesis on the suppression of the African slave trade. In the next twenty years he studied and taught at the Universities of Berlin, Pennsylvania and Atlanta, Georgia, and won doctorates of laws, literature, humanities and historical sciences. Throughout his life he kept up a steady stream of books, reviews and articles, as well as poems and novels, so that the major titles alone occupied a full page in the obituary number of the Accra newspaper *The Spark*.

His name will always be linked with the idea of Pan-Africanism, the cultural and political movement through which the Negro peoples in the Americas and in Africa have studied their common heritage and derived mutual support in their struggles for freedom. He was Secretary of the first Pan-African Congress in London in 1900, Organiser of that in Paris in 1919 and Chairman of the 1945 Congress in Manchester (the last to be held outside Africa), with the participation of Jomo Kenyatta, Kwame Nkrumah and many others who are today honoured national leaders.

Inseparable from this international role was his direct leadership of the Negro liberation movement in the United States. Already in 1909 he withdrew from full-time academic work to become one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People and for the next twenty-five years he edited its journal *The Crisis*. As a leader of Negro thought, he opposed on the one hand the separatism of Marcus Garvey's "back-to-Africa" demagogy in the 1920's or the Black Muslims of the present day; on the other hand he attacked the compromising approach of Booker T. Washington in the 1900's, and his successors who were willing to accept second-class citizenship in a white-dominated society. He died on the very eve of the "Jobs and Freedom" March in Washington.

Du Bois had no illusions about "non-political" struggle; his heart was always where the fight was thickest. In 1950 he ran for the U.S. Senate as candidate for the American Labour Party. In 1951 his work for world peace (as Chairman of the American Peace Information Centre, which organised the collection of 2½ million signatures for the Stockholm Appeal against nuclear weapons) led to his indictment as a "foreign agent". Even in McCarthy's hey-day, this charge could not be sustained, but his passport was withdrawn and only restored (with Paul Robeson's) in 1958. In 1961 he took the characteristic step (he regarded it as the logical culmination of his life of struggle) of joining the U.S. Communist Party at the moment of the Kennedy Administration's renewed onslaught on it by means of the Smith and McCarran Acts.

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## *Painting and the Provinces*

Most of our cities outside London are starved of painting and sculpture as they are of theatre and music. Many provincial galleries contain unexpected or forgotten treasures; but the overwhelming concentration of our collections is in London. Perhaps under socialism, a part of the contents of the National Gallery and the Tate will always be touring our cities, towns and villages.

This concentration is good neither for the people who look at pictures nor for those who make them. If great pictures could be seen easily by more people, there would be more interest—more discussion—and more painting.

Meantime, we can applaud the activities of certain local galleries, which do try to fill the gap, and especially those which feel a special responsibility for encouraging local painters. The Bear Lane Gallery in Oxford is a very small gallery with very small rooms, but it is wonderful how well the most diverse pictures look on its white walls. It has had many exhibitions which have enabled Oxford people to see what contemporary painters are doing; and make up their minds about them for themselves.

This summer, they have gone one further, and organised an Exhibition of local artists, that is, those living within 30 miles of Oxford. They have really shown how such a thing should be done. Advertisements were sent to local papers and to Art Societies and Clubs. No prizes were offered,.

The result—more than 300 entries, of which Mr. John Piper and Mrs. Deighton (the director of the Gallery who had to take the place of Mr. Paul Reilly because of illness) had to choose sixty. They say that only fifty or sixty of the paintings were at all easy to neglect, and certainly the sixty chosen reached a very high standard indeed.

Many types were represented from the purely representational to the highly abstract; but all were lively, few were meretricious and the total effect was one of considerable talent, and enormous enthusiasm for painting: an impression which it is very hard to bring away from the Royal Academy. The artists must have been pleased and inspired: and the visitors must have come away with a new intimacy with the art of painting.

What has been done by the Bear Lane Gallery could be done in scores if not hundreds of other centres. If local Galleries do not exist, and local Art Societies think it beyond their powers, then the Local Authorities should assist. A very tiny fraction of that 6d. rate would be sufficient.

## *The Necessity of Art*

We heartily welcome the publication by Penguin Books of Ernst Fischer's *The Necessity of Art* (4s. 6d.), admirably translated by Anna Bostock. Fischer joined the Austrian Communist Party in 1934, was for a short time Minister of Education in the first post-war Austrian Government, and is one of the most distinguished of continental Marxist scholars.

His book has four main chapters: The Origins of Art, Art and Capitalism, Content and Form, and The Loss and Recovery of Reality. Its underlying theme is the changing nature and function of art in human society. Some of Fischer's opinions may seem somewhat startling to some Marxist readers. He prefers, for example, the term "socialist art" to "socialist realism" and is in general doubtful of the value of the word realism as it is often used in Marxist criticism. Again, Fischer's high opinion not only of Kafka and Faulkner but of such contemporary artists as Henry Moore and J. D. Salinger may surprise some readers of *Marxism Today,* but they will find his arguments serious, stimulating and challenging. This is not, however, primarily a polemical work and, though Fischer clearly disagrees with some of the implications of the work of some other Marxist critics, for instance Lukacs, he puts forward his views with great moderation and a complete lack of dogmatism.

His whole book is informed not only with a remarkably wide learning and a sensitive delight in all the arts but with a profound hatred of capitalism and an equally deep confidence in the socialist world, present and future.

We hope to publish shortly a full review-article of *The Necessity of Art,* and meanwhile recommend it most cordially to our readers. We shall also be publishing an article by Ernst Fischer himself on *Art and Superstructure.*

## *Marxism Today—Price Increase*

We regret to have to announce that the considerable increase in the cost of production in recent years is forcing us to increase the price of *Marxism Today.*

As from January 1964, individual issues will cost 2s., and subscriptions 13s. 6d. for six months, 27s. for a year, including postage.

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# The Soviet Union in World Politics 1917-1963

*Andrew Rothstein*

## Socialists and the October Revolution

AT this season, and this year in particular, it is timely to recall the words with which our predecessors, the British Socialist Party, welcomed the October Revolution forty-six years ago:

> "Socialists—genuine and not make-believe Socialists—have seized the reins of power. That alone would have sufficed to strike dismay into the hearts of the ruling classes throughout the 'civilised' world. . . . For the first time we have the dictatorship of the proletariat established under our eyes, and that in a country whose immense extent and population, as well as potential strength, make it a factor in international life of first-class importance. . . . On the Bolsheviks' own part it was prompted by a courageous loyalty to the principles of International Socialism laid down, for the time of war, by the Stuttgart and Basel Congresses, and the success of their action was and is due to the support and sympathy of the masses. . . . Peace and bread, the suppression of the war-profiteer and the greedy landlord—this is what Lenin and his friends are trying to obtain for their own countrymen and for the distressed world at large."
>
> (*The Call*, November 29, 1917)

These words convey something of the immense thrill which the establishment of Soviet power in Russia sent through the Socialist movement of that day, in the countries on both sides of the line of bloody trenches then dividing Europe. The advanced workers then were well aware of the principles which the Stuttgart International Socialist Congress in 1907, and the Basel Congress in 1912, had laid down. War was "a crime against humanity and reason". The working class of all countries should "oppose to international imperialism the power of the international solidarity of the proletariat" (Basel). Wars were facilitated by "nationalist prejudices, systematically cultivated in the civilised countries with the object of distracting the proletarian masses from their own class tasks and making them forget the duty of international class solidarity." Wars would cease either when the capitalist order itself ceased to exist, "or when the immensity of human and financial sacrifices required by the development of war technique, and the popular indignation aroused by armaments, led to the elimination of this system" (Stuttgart).

"Should war nevertheless break out, it is the duty of Socialists to intervene with the object of putting a speedy end to it, to make use of the economic and political crisis in the fullest measure to rouse the masses of the people and thus accelerate the downfall of the domination of the capitalist class" (Stuttgart and Basel).

Still fresh in the minds of all active Socialists at that time, too, was the sharp debate at the Stuttgart Congress between the opportunist supporters of "Socialist colonial policy" and their revolutionary opponents, among them Lenin. As a result, the Congress had denounced capitalist colonial policy as "leading to the enslavement, compulsory labour or extermination of the native population". It was "destroying the natural wealth of the countries, where it establishes its system", and mercilessly exploiting the colonial peoples in the interests of a tiny minority, "while still further increasing the burdens imposed on the workers of the metropolitan countries", and "increasing the danger of military conflicts between the States engaged in colonisation". Socialists should carry on an uncompromising struggle against this system, and, while pressing for reforms which would improve the condition of the native peoples, strive by every means in their power "to develop a spirit of independence" among them.

At the time of the October Revolution, Britain and her allies, with the backing of the "make-believe Socialists", were holding down by military occupation the Indians, Irish, Egyptians, Algerians, Moroccans, Cambodians, Libyans, Albanians, Koreans, Filipinos and many other peoples, while Germany with her allies were doing the same for the Alsace-Lorrainers, the Slav peoples of central and south-eastern Europe and the Arab peoples of the Middle East. What the revolutionary Socialists understood by the new Soviet Government's loyalty to the principles of International Socialism was therefore that, for the first time in history, it had overthrown the classes interested in

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colonial exploitation, in imperialist war and in the huge armaments and nationalist propaganda which serve the purposes of war. The appeal of the Second Congress of Soviets, at its very first session on November 7, 1917, addressed to the workers, peasants and soldiers of Russia, and its first legislative act—the Decree on Peace moved by Lenin next day—had put this into black and white. This was indeed a new "factor in international life".

**What System had the Bolsheviks Overthrown?**

Tsarist Russia was well known as a particular bulwark of world reaction, one of that tiny group of imperialist Powers which had dominated the world in 1914. Being under the dictatorial control of a class of great landowners allied to a financial oligarchy, with large scale industrial capitalists still playing a junior part, Tsarist Russia was backward not only economically, compared with its rivals, but also politically. No other European Great Power had such a barbarous police and military regime, under which working people of all nationalities had no rights in practice. Such a Power was naturally the protector of every kind of backwardness abroad; and particularly after the defeat of the 1905 Revolution. The few months after the March, 1917, revolution replaced the autocratic Tsar by the Provisional Government of the big bourgeoisie, had shown that the latter intended to make as few changes as possible, either in the position of the workers, peasants and subject nationalities of the Russian Empire or in its aggressive and colonialist foreign policy.

Tsarist Russia had, between 1907 and 1911, first thwarted and then crushed the democratic revolution in Persia—in close co-operation with the Liberal Government of Great Britain. In 1908-9 it joined with the other European Powers in intrigues against the Turkish bourgeois revolution with a view to the partition of Turkey, which speedily drove the leaders into the arms of German militarism. After the Chinese revolution of 1911, Tsarist Russia joined with the other Great Powers in the counter-revolutionary intrigues which established the traitor Yuan Shih-Kai as "life President" in 1913, with a subsidy from a consortium of foreign banks. Tsarist Russia supported the terrorist organisation of Serbian officers which, by the assassination of the Austro-Hungarian Heir-Apparent in 1914, provided the pretext for the first world war. Today the Tsarist Government would have been among the foremost supporters of Franco and Salazar, Chiang Kai-shek and Queen Frederika of Greece (or some rival enemy of their own peoples).

Tsarist Russia had been a happy hunting-ground for world finance-capital. It had provided full value for the loan of £91,000,000 provided by the London and Paris banks in 1906, with the blessing of the Liberal Government of Britain and the Radical Government of France, to save Tsardom when it was in mortal danger from the first Russian Revolution. By 1914 one-third of the national debt, one-third of the shares in industry, two-fifths of the capital of the eighteen biggest banks, 50 per cent of the coal output, 60 per cent of oil and 67 per cent of Ukrainian iron and steel output were in the hands of foreign investors. On the average, eight million tons of grain a year were exported, while the vast majority of the peasants who grew it lived in the direst poverty. Handbooks for foreign investors like *The Russian Year Book*, published in London with official assistance, gave startling details of the low wages, long hours and restrictions on strikes—as well as omitting any reference to trade unions—which were calculated to encourage the influx of capital from abroad. This whole system, with its rich harvest for British, French and Belgian imperialism in the shape of dividends and interest, was swept away in 1917.

Thirdly, Tsarist Russia was one of the primary agents in the international arms race which had been denounced by the International Socialist Congresses. Her total military expenditure in the years 1905-1914 was over £495 millions—even more than that of Germany (£448 millions), let alone France (£347 millions)—and her naval expenditure £144 millions, which bore comparison with that of France (£162 million) and of Germany (£182 millions). Thus Tsarist Russia stood high in the arms race, even when Great Britain's huge expenditure over the same years is taken into account—£392 millions on the navy and £250 millions on the army (the pound sterling then could buy roughly five times as much as today). Russia's peacetime army of 1,400,000 men was the largest in Europe, as Britain's was the largest navy.

Thus vast physical force backed the reactionary policies of Russian Tsardom, at home and abroad. The October Revolution put an end once for all to this standing menace. What statistics could measure the degree to which this weakened the whole system of imperialism?

**The Blow to Imperialist Practices**

Not in theory, not in statistics, but in practice the new State began to show new standards of conduct, dictated by Socialism.

From the beginning the Soviet Government set about emancipating the subject nationalities of the Russian Empire. In December, 1917, it published an appeal to the eastern peoples announcing that, for Russia, the numerous treaties enslaving them

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no longer existed. As the defeat of the German, Austrian and Turkish Empires, coupled with the victories of the Red Army, showed these peoples that they could now strike a blow for their own freedom, the Soviet Government made good its pledges. In March, 1921, the Soviet Government signed a treaty with Iran, under which it abandoned all unequal rights and privileges extorted by Tsarist Russia, cancelled Iran's obligations under Tsarist loans, handed back roads, railways, harbours etc. built on Iranian soil and transferred all Russian private and public concessions, including the Russian bank in Iran, without compensation. A similar treaty with Turkey renounced all financial and other privileges (like the right of Russian citizens to be judged by non-Turkish courts) and repudiated any international acts concerning Turkey not approved by the National Assembly —which meant, in particular, the secret treaty of 1915 with Britain and France under which Russia was to be allotted Constantinople (Istanbul).

A third treaty with Afghanistan at the same time established conditions of absolute equality between the two countries, while Russia undertook to give financial and other material aid to Afghanistan, and free transit for goods bought by the latter, without any conditions. In 1917 the Soviet Government had already offered to cancel the unequal treaties imposed on China during the previous twenty years, but owing to various manoeuvres of the militarists then sharing control of China with the imperialist Powers, a treaty was not signed until May, 1924. It cancelled all treaties, agreements and other acts infringing China's sovereignty, renounced all concessions, extra-territorial rights, consular courts, etc. imposed on China and handed over for educational purposes the Russian part of the so-called "Boxer indemnity" imposed on China in 1901 (as a penalty for the great peasant rising which an international invading army had crushed in 1900).

The tremendous reverberations of these actions can be understood when you bear in mind that these countries were tied hand and foot at the time and for years to come by foreign control of their finances, customs, economic resources (especially Iran), and even (in Afghanistan) of their foreign policy while foreign garrisons and courts on Chinese soil continued until well on into the Second World War.

But the novel policy of the Soviet Union took more than a negative form. Military action by Soviet forces drove "White" and British forces out of northern Iran in 1920 and enabled the Iranian Government to reject the infamous "19 Points" imposed by Lord Curzon, which would have made the country a British colony. Arms and munitions (including much of British origin), captured by the Red Army from the foreign-equipped forces of Denikin, Kolchak and other White leaders were transferred to the Turkish Republican Army in 1921-22, and enabled it to crush the Greek and other invaders of its territory. Nor was this aid a feature only of the early years of Soviet power.

The Soviet Union in 1937-1940 provided China with arms, munitions and other equipment to the value of over $400 million for its resistance to Japanese aggression, as well as supporting it diplomatically at Geneva and elsewhere against British and other friends of the Japanese. Vast aid, in the shape of planes, tanks, guns and skilled technicians was sent, in spite of great geographical and political difficulties, to the Spanish Republic between 1936 and 1938, for its resistance to the German and Italian aggressors and their ally Franco, supported by Tory Britain. And after the Second World War the vast equipment surrendered to the Soviet forces in 1945 by imperialist Japan's strongest army—its arms included 1,155 tanks and self-propelled guns and 1,800 planes—were made available for the People's Liberation Army of China (which had never before had such large quantities of modern arms and munitions) for use in its victorious offensive of 1947-49. At this time the armed forces of the U.S.A. were actively engaged in operations on the side of Chiang Kai-shek.

## Economic Aid

In the economic field, no less than the diplomatic and military, the world has had practical proof since November 1917 that the confidence of the advanced workers was not misplaced. Within the Soviet Union, subject nationalities at various stages of development—tribal, feudal, capitalist—were helped to advance to socialism by special expenditure on health and education, irrigation, railway and road building, as well as by direct transfer and construction of large scale modern industries, agricultural enterprises, and technical aid. Within the limits of its possibilities, and when asked, the Soviet Government has invariably given similar help outside its frontiers for countries otherwise liable to fall again under the domination of foreign finance-capital. Nor did it exact any conditions—least of all that they had to adopt an (artificial and imported) "Socialist way of life".

From 1924 onwards the Soviet Union helped the recently-established Mongolian People's Republic to create its own State Bank and national independent currency, build up a co-operative trading system, establish a State monopoly of foreign trade, develop its own main roads, and

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start a number of modern mechanised factories and mines—all the property of People's Mongolia. Similarly, between 1934 and 1937 the Soviet Government built two modern textile mills for Turkey at Kaiseri and Nazilli, training technicians and skilled workmen in its own factories and providing a twenty-year interest-free credit for the purpose.

These were only the seeds of a policy which flowered on a great scale after the Second World War, when world imperialism had suffered a second and far heavier blow by the overthrow of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and feudal-militarist Japan. Every one of the People's Democracies, whether their previous governments had been on the enemy's or the Allied side, received food supplies, raw materials and other primary necessities from the Soviet Union when the fighting ended, so that they could begin restoring their shattered economies and saving their peoples from hunger and disease. At the same time the Soviet Government had to fight a hard diplomatic battle to protect several of these countries against the rapacious demands for "reparations"—for the foreign capitalists who had exploited them before 1939-40, in perfect harmony with their then Hitlerite governments—which came from the British Labour Government and its American ally. Later came scientific and technical aid on a big scale: mixed enterprises, for establishing new industries —ultimately handed over to the various Socialist States themselves; and long-term credit and trade agreements which enabled the People's Democracies to import or build the most modern productive establishments of all kinds. In the case of People's China, this has meant 286 up-to-date industrial establishments and projects built and building, 1,400 blue prints for entire large-scale works and nearly 20,000 other sets of technical documents: in particular, the Soviet Union made it possible for China to build up her own defence production—iron and steel and heavy machinery, chemicals, aircraft, tank and aluminium industries. Thus not in words but in deeds, the U.S.S.R. redeemed many Allied pledges made in wartime which otherwise would have gone, to say the least, unfulfilled.

Perhaps even more striking, because there was no community of political and social ideas beyond the single aim of ending the consequences of colonialism, was Soviet aid to the newly liberated but economically undeveloped countries—such ex-colonies as India, Burma, Egypt, Ceylon, Indonesia, Cambodia, Guinea, Mali, Ghana, Sudan or Tunis. Over 480 big industrial projects have been completed or are under construction with Soviet aid in these countries—iron and steel works, engineering factories, chemical works and oil refineries, power stations, building materials factories, light industries and food-processing—to the total value of £1,200 millions. Among them are such giants as the Bhilai Works in India, which will produce 2½ million tons of steel yearly: the great Aswan Dam in Egypt, which will increase the country's agricultural area by one-third and provide one of the biggest power-stations in the world: the first modern deep-sea port in the Yemen at Hodeida: a big factory producing chemical fertilisers in Indonesia, etc. All these enterprises serve to develop a balanced, independent economy in the countries concerned: all of them belong 100 per cent to their governments: all are built with long term credits from the U.S.S.R. at purely nominal rates of interest: in all of them Soviet technicians and skilled workers have trained up thousands of colleagues from among the local people. History provides no parallel for anything remotely resembling such massive and disinterested aid.

## Independence Preserved

But here, too, the Soviet Union had to protect these countries, in the ways open to it, against armed threats from the expelled imperialists. In 1956 it had to threaten armed intervention before the British, French and Israeli aggression against Egypt was stopped. It was officially thanked by the Syrian Government in December, 1957, for its warning which prevented American-Turkish aggression by sea and land. In July, 1958, by its explicit warnings, far-advanced preparations for Anglo-American invasion from Jordan and the Lebanon of the new Irak Republic were halted. When the struggle of the Algerian people ended in victory in 1962, the help provided by Soviet arms was officially acknowledged, as earlier it had been acknowledged by the Indonesian Republic. But the most striking, indeed historic, case was that of Cuba. As recently as 1954, the United States had successfully organised the counter-revolutionary invasion of Guatemala and the overthrow of its lawfully-elected progressive government (repeating Hitler's and Mussolini's invasion of Republican Spain). In 1962 open preparations were being made in the U.S.A. for invading Cuba—reported by numerous British and American correspondents on the spot. But it was the placing of Soviet rockets on Cuban territory, and the threat of Soviet retaliation in a nuclear war, that led to the settlement of October 28, 1962, which provided a pledge not to invade if the rockets were withdrawn.

To use one's own strength, in face of the weakness of smaller countries, not in order to swallow

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them up or to join with others in tearing them apart, but to make them strong enough to stand on their own feet: not only "to develop a spirit of independence" among them, but to help them to make it a reality—this was the new method in international affairs of which even the most consistent Socialists at Stuttgart, half a century before, could only dream.

The Soviet Union could not always succeed on its own against geographical or political odds—either in Spain in 1936-8 or in the Congo in 1960-62. Yet the sum-total of its forty-six years of existence shows that, in its hands, the principles of international Socialism have been a powerful lever for changing the world.

## "Suppression of the Profiteer and the Landlord"

The sweeping changes in the status of the working class in Russia, brought about by the October Revolution, began to affect the policies of the ruling classes in the industrial countries even while they were organising intervention in 1918 and 1919—so great was the impression made on the workers in their respective countries. Adult suffrage—at a time when only New Zealand, Finland and New South Wales had introduced it, and most countries had property qualifications even for male voters. The Eight Hour Day—which existed only (and not completely) in Australia. Statutory annual paid holidays of at least two weeks—which existed nowhere else in the world. Non-contributory social insurance—which even yet exists in no capitalist country. Equal pay for equal work for women—again a unique feature of the Socialist countries still, except in a few categories of industry elsewhere. As for workers' participation in planned management of the socially-owned basic industries; pensions at 50-55 per cent of earnings; the six hour day for youth while getting the rate for the job; prohibition of dismissal of shop stewards without trade union permission, or of overtime except on a severely limited scale, and again only with sanction of the union—to name only a few of the other social reforms introduced by the Soviet Labour Codes of 1918 and 1922—these remain still the privilege of the Soviet worker and those of the other Socialist countries.

The total impact of these revolutionary changes on the world, during the years immediately after the first world war, was enormous.

This was an outstanding influence on world history, compared with which the effect of the American and French eighteenth-century bourgeois-democratic revolutions was a modest one.

Moreover, just because the Soviet Union was the first land where (as the 1924 T.U.C. General Council delegation noted) the workers were the ruling class and exercising its responsibilities, they were able also to exercise trade union solidarity on a scale far exceeding that of other workers, and without being hindered or discouraged by their Government. Thus it was that the Soviet workers, instead of sending coal to Britain during the General Strike and seven months' miners' lockout of 1926, sent cash—£1,200,000 of it—which helped to keep many a miner's child alive. After the heroic stand of the Socialist and Communist workers of Vienna against the onslaught of the Austrian Fascists in 1934, and the great rising of the Spanish miners in the Asturias in the same year, the Soviet trade unions sent more aid than all other countries put together. So also during the Spanish Civil War, the material contribution of the Soviet trade unions and co-operative movement amounted to close on £1,000,000 by 1939. Other examples could be quoted since the Second World War. The Soviet workers have always been able to give practical expression to their sympathy for the struggle against "the profiteer and the greedy landlord".

But of course the Russian Revolution, just because it was Socialist, could not and did not attempt to follow the example of the new exploiting classes who were put in power by the American and the French revolutions, and who sought to impose their policies and their interests by force on other peoples of their respective continents. "The victorious proletariat can force no blessings of any kind upon any foreign nation without undermining its own victory by so doing," wrote Engels in September, 1882. The same idea guided Lenin when discussing the foreign relations of the Soviet State. The idea that international revolution could come about by "prodding", he wrote (*Pravda*, February 28 and March 1, 1918), would be "a complete break with Marxism, which always rejected the 'prodding' of revolutions, which develop as the acuteness of class contradictions giving birth to revolutions matures". Similarly, when the new Party programme was being discussed at the Eighth Party Congress a year later, Lenin ridiculed the idea that you could tell peoples who had not developed the idea of revolution, that "we shall overthrow your exploiters". "No decree has yet been issued that all countries must live according to the Bolshevik revolutionary calendar, and if it had, it would not be obeyed. . . . It is not by means of violence that Communism is implanted," he said (March 19, 1919). They had never "promised or aspired to refashion the whole world with the forces of

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Russia alone"; they "never reached such a degree of insanity", Lenin underlined at a Moscow Party conference on November 21, 1920. "The export of revolution is nonsense," Stalin re-emphasised in a talk with Roy Howard, chief of the United Press of America, on March 1, 1936.

## Peaceful Coexistence: Principle and Practice

What was the alternative to "prodding international revolution"? It was the policy of peaceful coexistence with countries still living under a different social system—while building the Socialist society at home as the strongest possible object lesson and propaganda, giving the maximum aid in practicable forms to the peoples and forces struggling against imperialism, and being ready at all times to repel armed or other attacks by the imperialists. In pursuing this policy, the Soviet State could use the opportunities presented by divisions in the capitalist camp itself—not for the purpose of building bigger war alliance, as in the days of Tsarist Russia, but on the contrary to isolate the warmongers and thereby make war more difficult, less practicable.

Again and again Lenin explained these principles—and his explanations have become the classic basis of Soviet foreign policy. The problem was (he wrote in his *Theses on Peace* as early as January 7, 1918) "how more certainly and surely to safeguard for the Socialist revolution the possibility of consolidating its position, or at least maintaining itself, in one country, until the other countries join it". The Soviet Government was in favour of business relations with America "and all other countries" he told an American bourgeois journalist in February, 1920. There were no obstacles to peace with America and all other nations in Europe and Asia. "Let the American capitalists leave us alone: we will leave them alone. We are ready even to pay them the gold for the machines, equipment, etc., useful for transport and production. And not only in gold, but in raw materials, too." This did not mean that "the Socialist calf and the capitalist wolf would fall into each other's arms", he said at a Moscow party activists' meeting later the same year (December 6, 1920); it would be a struggle, a war in the field of economics—"but that is a tremendous progress": even economic concessions to the capitalists would mean "some indirect guarantee of peace". And at the first International Economic Conference at Genoa (March 1922) came the classic Soviet offer drawn up by Lenin: "In the present period of history, which permits of the parallel existence of the old social order and of the new order now being born, economic collaboration between the States representing the two systems of property is imperatively necessary for general economic reconstruction."

It was these principles that the new Programme of the C.P.S.U. (adopted two years ago), restated when it declared that the peaceful coexistence of States with different social systems was "the only reasonable principle of maintaining relations between States" when the world is so divided—and that "peaceful coexistence of the Socialist and capitalist countries is an objective necessity for the development of human society". But in making this declaration, the Communists of the U.S.S.R. were not *only* restating Lenin's principles, they were relying on more than forty years of practical experience.

Directly the Soviet State got a breathing-space by going out of the first world war brought about by imperialist rivalries, it established diplomatic relations with the Kaiser's Germany. Again and again during the subsequent four years' invasion by imperialist States it offered them peace, trade and normal relations. When invasion had collapsed, but they would not establish diplomatic relations (like Britain up to 1924), it agreed on official trading relations. When they would not have even that (like the United States up to 1933), the Soviet Union concentrated on what trade it could develop with private firms. Throughout these years it offered to co-operate with the capitalist countries in developing world economic resources in ways which would not undermine its own independence or that of other countries; detailed programmes for this purpose were put forward at the Genoa Conference already mentioned and at the World Economic and Monetary Conference held in London in 1933.

But it also sought political means of reducing the danger of war. In 1922 it held a Disarmament Conference with its western neighbours, proposing (unsuccessfully) sweeping cuts in armies and arms budgets for itself and smaller ones for them. From 1925 onwards it signed a number of pacts of non-aggression with many countries. From 1927 onwards, at the Geneva preparatory commission for the Disarmament Conference and at that conference itself (1932-1934), the Soviet Union put forward a series of detailed schemes—for total, partial or 33 per cent disarmament. And when the obvious encouragement given by the imperialists to Hitler Germany, Fascist Italy and Japan was leading unmistakably to a new world war the Soviet Union campaigned vigorously (1934-1939) for pacts of mutual assistance which, by counterposing to the aggressors the overwhelming forces of scores of countries grouped

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around Britain, France, and the U.S.S.R., could have nipped their war plans in the bud.

### After World War II

All these efforts failed—but after the Second World War the balance of forces had changed. Recovering rapidly from the devastation of 1941-1945, the Soviet Union now reached the position of the second world power. It was henceforth in a position not merely to *preach* peaceful co-existence, or to induce trade co-operation as a step towards that end: it could increasingly—with the aid of other Socialist States, of the working class and peace movements in many countries, and even of numerous States shaking off the fetters of colonialism—begin to *impose* peaceful coexistence. If Fascism, militarism and monopoly capitalism were saved by the Western Allies in part of Germany, they were rooted out in the other part. If Soviet disarmament schemes were rejected time after time by Britain and the U.S.A., at least the many novel, logical and far-reaching proposals they contained won the support of hundreds of millions of people in all countries and led to a big growth of movements for peace, exercising pressure on their governments. If for years the Soviet Union was alone on the United Nations Security Council, and supported only by the Socialist countries and a few others, in campaigning against colonialism, the last few years, beginning with 1960, have seen a real landslide in this respect—and a corresponding appearance, for the first time, of United Nations majorities pressing for the end of colonial rule everywhere and of trade discrimination by the imperialist powers (the convening of a World Trade Conference for 1964, originally the proposal of the Soviet Union, is an outstanding case).

And if the imperialist Great Powers have up to the present successfully resisted its proposals for prohibition of the manufacture of nuclear weapons, renunciation of nuclear warfare, destruction of stockpiles, and ending of all tests, the Moscow Treaty of August 5 did end the above-ground tests which were poisoning the atmosphere, keeping up the pace of nuclear weapons research and preventing even the start of measures to reduce international tension. Seen in perspective, against the record of foreign policy of the Soviet State from November 1917 onwards, this is one of the biggest achievements of the *peacetime* history of the U.S.S.R.

No more than in pre-1941 days did this steady pressure for a new direction to be given to international affairs mean that the Soviet Union sacrificed its basic principles of international Socialism in order to curry favour with the imperialists. When the United States insisted on splitting Korea in 1945-6, the Soviet Union supplied the North with all the economic and military aid it needed to lay the foundations of a strong Socialist State. Even more, of course, did this apply to People's China, as already mentioned, despite the armed aggression of the U.S.A.—and many heart-felt tributes were paid by the Chinese leaders to the effectiveness of Soviet aid, both economic and military, from 1949 onwards. The case of Hungary in 1956, where the Soviet Union used its treaty rights under the Warsaw Pact to save the country from counter-revolution—which so clearly had its intimate links with Western imperialism—was a heavy blow to the latter, as the howls of rage from the West's politicians and newspapers demonstrated with uncanny accuracy. Other examples have already been mentioned.

But it would be a serious omission from the picture if we did not notice one very peculiar difficulty with which the Soviet Union had to contend, at crucial turns in its foreign policy, from quite a different quarter. It is part of Soviet history, and must not be forgotten.

### "Capitulation, Betrayal, Degeneration"

In February and March 1918 the Soviet Republic was in deadly peril from the advancing German army. The old army was utterly demoralised and could not fight. A new Socialist army was only just beginning to be formed. Economically the country was experiencing complete chaos. The big capitalists had been overthrown, but small-scale capitalists and rich peasant exploiters existed everywhere. At this moment, confusion and romanticism among certain leaders of the Bolsheviks—particularly Bukharin and Trotsky—led them into opposition to Lenin, Sverdlov and Stalin on the question of signing peace with Germany on severe and humiliating terms. Lenin's object was to save Soviet power in at least Russia proper. The opposition were calling for a revolutionary war. For several weeks they succeeded in postponing signature, and the Germans' terms grew worse.

The clearer it became that Lenin's point of view was the only practicable one, the more furious became the opposition. They transformed the regional Party papers at Petrograd (*Kommunist*) and Moscow (*Sotzial-Demokrat*) into their factional organs, in preparation for a Special Party Congress called for March 6 to 8—to decide whether the peace treaty with Germany, signed at Brest-Litovsk on March 3, should be ratified. The opposition campaign took a violently "left" line.

"Soviet power is now becoming a pure formality," stated the Moscow Regional Committee of the Party, under "left" influence, on February 24.

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An appeal of the "Left" Communists, on March 3, declared that, by signing the Treaty, the Party leadership had sunk "from the positions of the revolutionary proletariat to the positions of the declassed soldier" (later in the statement: "to the positions of the declassed speculator"). The Treaty, they said, meant "the capitulation of the proletariat in its class war against the foreign and Russian bourgeoisie". At the Congress on March 8 they went further in the Theses they submitted.

The terms laid down by Germany, which Lenin proposed accepting, "cancel out the international significance of the Russian revolution" and "turn the Soviet Republic into a tool of imperialist policy". The policy of the Central Committee majority was "undermining the revolutionary will of the proletariat" and "delaying the development of the international revolution". It was a policy of "wavering and compromises". Its social basis was "the process of the degeneration of our Party from a purely proletarian one into 'a Party of the whole people' ". Some of the other attacks made by the "lefts" can be found quoted in Lenin's speeches and articles, available in English.

Nevertheless, the Theses were rejected by 28 to 9, with 1 declared abstention, and a substantive vote endorsed Lenin's attitude by 30 to 12, with 4 abstentions. The dire consequences predicted by the "left" opposition never materialised.

## "Workers' Opposition"

In the autumn and winter of 1920 the long series of foreign invasions of Soviet Russia came to an end (except for Japanese occupation of the Far East, which lingered on until December, 1922). Soviet Russia was victorious. But the price was terrible. Industry was almost at a standstill, outside the few war factories. Agriculture was at a low level of output. There were hardly any consumer goods, and town workers were getting from two to four ounces of bread a day. Hunger and epidemics were rampant. There was widespread discontent among the peasants, now that they felt their land was safe; and the workers were at the end of their tether. The struggle for normal trade relations with the capitalist countries was beginning.

When the Party began discussing what was to be done, particularly as regards the trade unions, several opposition groups led by influential Party figures arose. Among them those who shouted loudest against Lenin and the majority of the Central Committee were the "Workers' Opposition"—a more or less syndicalist factional group led by two very popular figures, Alexandra Kollontay and Alexander Shlyapnikov. Its particular distinguishing feature was its appeal to those workers who were exhausted by the strain of three years' struggle. Here are some of the verdicts its leaders passed on the situation.

In a booklet, *The Workers' Opposition*, circulated by Kollontay in the spring of 1921, in anticipation of the Tenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. which was to discuss the question of the trade unions, the dictatorship of the working class in Russia was once more described as only "a formal signboard". The Communist Party had again been "drawn away from the class path". The working class was "playing an ever smaller part in the Soviet Republic". Instead, "big magnates of capitalist production, obedient and excellently paid hired servants of capital" were "exercising an increasing influence on policy": they were "hostile not only to Communism but to the elementary aspirations and tasks of the proletariat". Trade relations with the capitalist powers were "proceeding over the heads of both Russian and foreign organised proletariats".

At the Congress itself, she repeated that the Party was "all the time being influenced by groupings outside it", demoralising it and causing it to lean now towards petty-bourgeois tendencies, now towards "representatives of the bourgeois world" in Soviet institutions. Medvediev, another leader of the Workers' Opposition, stated that petty-bourgeois elements were predominant in the Party, and therefore there would be "a vast, crushing majority" in favour of Lenin. Shlyapnikov threatened that, if Lenin's resolution against factionalism within the Party were adopted, they would renounce all posts and transfer discussion "for judgment by the international Communist proletariat".

At the Third Congress of the Communist International (July 5, 1921), in fact, Kollontay stated that the new economic policy adopted by the Tenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. meant "on the whole, the restoration of the old system of production, of capitalism". It drew its inspiration partly from "foreign capital, which has in Russia its own ideological agents, so to speak, and through them is influencing our policy". This was "losing the confidence of the mass of the workers in our Party". If this turn in policy went further, the Soviet Republic would lose its Communist character, and then "the nucleus of firm Communists will take into its hands the red banner of revolution, to ensure the victory of Communism throughout the world".

The predictions of the "Workers' Opposition" proved as false as those of the "Left Communists" had been. But their similarity was remarkable.

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## Trotskyite Attacks

A third experience began, after Lenin's death, when the C.P.S.U. started preparations for the planned development of the national economy in the direction of Socialism. In 1924-25 State industry, although recovered from the conditions described earlier, was still producing at below the 1913 level, and there were in addition large numbers of privately owned or leased small workshops. Agricultural production was still mainly in the hands of the middle peasantry, out of whom an important class of petty rural capitalists —the kulaks—were constantly crystallising. Retail trade was still to a substantial extent (25 per cent) in the hands of private individuals. There were still over a million unemployed. The advance towards Socialist planning, therefore, had to be careful, measured and balanced—encouraging co-operative marketing and purchase of implements among the peasants, accumulating State funds by every form of economy to build up heavy industry, resisting tendencies to inflation, etc. Much self-denial was imposed by the need to export raw materials in order to buy machinery and equipment.

Various dissatisfied groups were prompted by these difficulties to go into opposition—first (1923-4) led by Trotsky, later (1925-7) to be joined by other dissidents led by Zinoviev and Kamenev. Their story can be read in the new *History of the C.P.S.U.* But the charges against the Party leadership advanced by the Trotskyists and their allies have a special interest. The "platform" they advanced in September 1927 is a convenient example.

They stated that there was an "absolute and relative growth of capitalism", with "a multiplication of private capitalists in the cities". The share of the working class in the national income had fallen. The Party leaders were "moving in zigzags" and "confusing the proletarian army". Thereby they were preparing the way for the restoration of capitalism. Meanwhile, the City Soviets had "been losing in these recent years all real significance". Bureaucracy in the Party was growing at a "ruinous" rate, while the nucleus of its Central Committee was "moving continually to the right". This situation was having international effects. For example, the Chinese Revolution had been defeated because of the "fundamentally mistaken policy" of the C.P.S.U.—a Menshevik policy which was being "completed by the frank and open castration of the revolutionary teaching of Lenin". The Party leadership believed in the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country—which was an "essentially social-democratic appraisal of the present epoch": namely, that capitalism would remain stabilised "for a series of decades". Soviet foreign policy, in short, was leading to "a full capitulation on the part of the Soviet power". All these errors were "opportunist mistakes"—and the Opposition would help the working-class section of the Party, "largely crowded out of the Party leadership", to "take the face of the Party into its own hands"—a direct threat to let loose a factional struggle.

Before taking one last example, it should be noted, here, too, that the denunciation of Soviet home and foreign policy, while in all essentials it was a restatement in fiercer terms of the charges of 1918 and 1920-1, proved in practice to be just as far from realities.

From 1934 onwards, with the growing menace of Fascist aggression in Europe and its alliance with Japanese aggression in Asia, the Soviet Union sought to create barriers to war by bringing together in pacts of mutual assistance countries which would be in deadly peril should war be launched by Hitler or his friends. It sought to get an "Eastern Pact" in which Germany itself would join: then in 1935, when Hitler had shown his intentions plainly enough by his refusal, it signed mutual assistance pacts against aggression with France and Czechoslovakia. It offered a similar arrangement with Britain—but the Tories in power refused. In 1938 it proposed arrangements for mutual defence to the Western Powers —but the British and French governments preferred to hand over, first Austria, then Czechoslovakia (at Munich on September 30, 1938) to Hitler. In 1939 the U.S.S.R. negotiated for several months with Britain and France for a mutual assistance pact, but in vain: Chamberlain and his French colleague—and the parties supporting them—were mesmerised by the thought that, if they held off, the Nazis might "go east". As a result, we had the second world war.

Throughout these years the Soviet Union was assailed by Trotskyists, I.L.P. propagandists and other "left wingers" on much the same lines as before. This policy "was the end of the Communist struggle against capitalism". Stalin had "tied the revolutionary proletariat to the bourgeois war-machine". Socialism in a single country had made the Soviet government "as nervous of the action of the world proletariat as any Fascist dictator". In Spain the "Soviet bureaucracy" was actually fighting in defence of capitalism. And all this (I have quoted one of the most representative Trotskyist writers) was based on a picture of the Soviet Union as "a caricature of Socialism . . . a backward country . . . a hierarchy of bureaucrats, exploiting the worker . . . it destroys the Soviets, the chief political gain of the revolution

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. . . the Russian proletariat seems to have exchanged one set of masters for another".

Is it really necessary to point out that the last people in the world to believe the story about Russia's capitulation to capitalism, at home and abroad, have been (and are) the capitalists? Has not the experience of the Soviet Union's giant contribution to victory in the second world war, and, of its social, economic, cultural and scientific advances since 1945, again given the lie to the kind of analysis and prediction quoted? As the old verse has it:

"My father, in his house of logs,
Said the country's going to the dogs.
His father, in the Irish bogs,
Said the country's going to the dogs.
*His* father, in his old skin togs,
Said the country's going to the dogs.
And all that I have got to state
Is: the dogs have had a damn long wait!"

But there is more to it than that. The circumstances in which each of these waves of abuse, misrepresentation and ludicrous prophecy broke out were, as was shown, quite different. Moreover, in the first case old Bolsheviks in the main, and some recent converts from the "Left" Social Democrats of pre-October days, were involved, while in the second and third, there was a much larger proportion of what in 1918 were called "October Bolsheviks", and many who had come in even later—while their following included (especially in the case of the Trotskyists) thousands of Red Army men and workers who had been peasants only a few years before. In the fourth case, the attacks were launched from abroad, with a fairly wide basis of petty-bourgeois intellectuals who had played some part in the Communist or Left Wing movement. What could be common to all these varied groups in such varied circumstances?

To examine the sameness of the charges, all the way through, is to find the answer. It was disbelief in the political consciousness and maturity of the Russian working class and of its Bolshevik party —forgetfulness that they had had a particular history of Socialist staunchness and manoeuvring, of seeking allies without sacrificing revolutionary essentials, and of work under illegal conditions with Marxist and internationalist inspiration, in the few but great centres of industry which Russia possessed, during twenty years (which included the great upheaval of 1905, without parallel since the French Revolution). Through all the charges—straying from the class path, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Soviets becoming "pure formalities", falling under the influence of the international bourgeoisie, capitulating to it, abandoning Marxism—ran this disbelief. And in every case it led the attackers into fiasco after fiasco. "Go left and you come right", the Bolshevik workers used to say to the ultra-lefts among them, before 1914.

## Some Conclusions

Of course there have been errors in these last 46 years. Lenin himself mentioned more than one. Circumstances did not always permit accurate assessments, even when balanced judgments were sought. In Stalin's day there were overall correct and fruitful policies—but also errors of judgment caused by other circumstances. They sprang from that same cult of his personality, as a supposed monopolist of Marxist theory and practice, which internally led to gross abuses of power and criminal breaches of Soviet law. The elimination of these abuses, the return to collective leadership, the return to consultations between leaders and people, have had a beneficial effect on Soviet foreign policy, too. But that does not mean that the charges we have seen recurring at so many stages were true. The whole record of the U.S.S.R. is evidence to the contrary. It is practical experience, the history of the C.P.S.U. since 1917, which has been the test of the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism which it embodies, in the particular circumstances of the country which once was the Russian Empire. And as Marx taught us, there is no reliable test of theory but practice. It is the accusers on all these (and other) occasions who have proved political bankrupts, not the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

On the cover of the old *Communist International* magazine, started in 1919, there used to be a black and white drawing: a powerful workman, bearded and aproned like the Russian he was, smashing at the chains in which Earth was fettered—but smashing at that spot where on the great globe was marked his own country. He was an example to the workers of all lands then, and the example (used, of course, in adaptation to their specific conditions) is not out of date yet.

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# What N.E.D.C. and Labour Party Planning Mean

*J. R. Campbell*

THE debate on Economic Planning at the Trades Union Congress took place mainly around the question of wage restraint, and many other aspects of the General Council's report on this subject were not debated. There were one or two fundamental criticisms to the effect that planning was a question of political and economic power, and that no genuine planning could take place if the monopolists were left in control of the main privately owned industries in the country. There was, however, no basic examination of the type of "planning" favoured by the National Economic Development Council, or of the lines for the future development of that body, suggested by the General Council. Such omissions frequently happen as a result of the way in which major Congress debates are organised.

The General Council puts forward a comprehensive report, which is debated alongside a group of resolutions which are supposed to be related to the subjects with which the report deals. This year the subject of most of the resolutions was wages, and that was debated. There was not, however, any debate on the "planning" of the economy as laid down by the N.E.D.C. or the General Council. Nevertheless the report was passed.

A few weeks later, much more vaguely, the Labour Party Conference also endorsed a resolution on economic planning, which included a paragraph about an incomes policy. A number of unions which had been exceedingly sceptical about the Trades Union Congress document, found it possible to vote for this Labour Party resolution. Has the Labour Party, then, a basically different policy on planning and wages from that of the Trades Union Congress, or is the same policy being clothed in different words? We shall see.

## Why Plan Capitalism?

The General Council's report on "Economic Development and Planning" asserts that economic planning, under capitalism, can create more dynamic conditions than exist today, and that the unions will benefit from these conditions. Economic planning, it says, not only presupposes forecasting as to the directions in which the economy is developing, it also demands conscious decisions on the part of the Government, the great capitalist firms, and the unions on the methods which should be adopted to secure a faster rate of economic development than has been achieved hitherto. It will be necessary for the Government in agreement with the great firms and the trade unions to establish planning institutions in order to secure an "efficient allocation of our resources. This cannot be achieved by laissez-faire policies. To avoid waste and distortion economic growth requires policies for balanced expansion; this calls for selective action, and for the exercise of conscious choice through institutions established for that purpose." The trade unions are expected to support such policies because they will promote economic expansion in which the unions will be able to secure real improvement in wages and working conditions. In addition, however, the General Council believes that "economic planning on a consultative basis will help us to secure our other main objective—*a greater share in decisions about the industries in which our members work and more influence over national economic and social policies which affect our members as workers and citizens*" (italics ours).

## Is it Democratic?

This statement is quite misleading. The N.E.D.C. reports give no indication whatever that this body as a whole has for one of its objects giving trade unions a greater share in decisions about the industries in which their members work. Such major decisions outside negotiations about wages and working conditions are usually made by the top level managements in private industry, without any consultation with the unions at all and with only token consultation in most of the nationalised industries. The N.E.D.C., if its reports are any guide, has no policy for altering this state of affairs. So the T.U.C. is trying to represent it as something which it is not.

Like some speakers at the Labour Party Conference, the General Council is at great pains to

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make it clear that it is not talking about socialist economic planning, but a type of "planning" consistent with the manufacturing industries of this country remaining under monopoly control:

> "In an industrially complex and democratic society like Britain's it is impossible for the government to plan the whole economy *in detail*. Many decisions must be left to individuals and to social groups if, for example, a reasonable degree of consumers' choice is to be maintained. The Government must therefore plan in consultation with the people who are going to be affected by planning, and on whose decisions the success of the plan will to some extent depend —*most notably the two sides of industry*." (Italics ours.)

What ugly barefaced sophistry. Of course an economy cannot be planned *in every detail* centrally—some decisions within the framework of the general plan can be taken at local and factory level. Of course "a reasonable degree of consumer choice" has to be maintained and appropriate means of consulting citizens as workers and consumers have got to be developed. But, under cover of these platitudes, the General Council is introducing the conception that its type of "democratic planning" demands that the monopolists be recognised for all time as one of "the sides of industry". This is presented as a great democratic principle. There are some unhappy lands, the Report implies, where the government seeks to plan the whole economy. This type of planning the General Council rejects as being incompatible with democracy. To the General Council democratic planning means that the monopolists are to be confirmed in their control of industry, and any planning must be based on their consent to the measures proposed. This General Council concept of democratic planning is really monopoly capitalist pseudo-planning.

We are told that "the advantage of this method is that it recognises that planning, to be effective, must be largely based on consent. The more the representatives of industry at all levels are involved in creating a plan, the more committed they will be to implementing it." When we look at the other parts of the report this simply does not make sense. "Conservative Governments, *for a long period,* held that the best way to promote change was to retreat from intervening in the economy except in the most general way and to leave market forces free to assert themselves. This attitude was most clearly expressed in their attempt to establish the supremacy of monetary policy." So says the General Council in another part of the same Report. But who was the Tory Government representing when it re-established "the supremacy of monetary policy", that is to say higher interest rates, credit squeezes, wage pauses, Thorneycroft, Heathcoat Amory, Selwyn Lloyd and all that? Surely the monopolists! Yet we are told that a proper type of democratic planning demands the consent of these people to any measures proposed. Mr. James Callaghan and Mr. Anthony Crosland made clear at the Labour Party Conference that this was the kind of planning that party had in mind.

## Who Will Control?

What influences will be brought to bear on planning of the N.E.D.C. type? First the influence of the political representative of the Government —the Chancellor of the Exchequer; (2) the bureaucrats from Government departments; (3) the bureaucrats on N.E.D.C. (the top ones appointed by the Government); (4) the representatives of the nationalised industries (Dr. Beeching etc.); (5) the representatives of the private employers; (6) the representatives of the T.U.C. The chances of this bunch, under a Tory Government, giving any worthwhile consent to any progressive policy is absolutely nil.

"The potential value of N.E.D.C. is that it provides a forum in which agreements can be reached between the Government and the two sides of industry. Such an agreement can only be based on thorough and objective studies carried out by a staff which is responsible directly to the Council and is not open to the suspicion—as a Government Department would be—that its work is influenced by pre-determined Government policies. To rob the Council of these characteristics would destroy the greater part of its value." Clearly this whole conception has been worked out by the T.U.C. with a Tory Government in mind. The "forum" would enable the Trades Union Congress to state its position to the Government and the employers on some of the leading economic questions of the day. Indeed we have almost the suggestion that the T.U.C. and the employers might come together and force changes of policy on reluctant Governments—whether Tory or Labour. Perhaps the General Council might reflect that the alleged independence of the N.E.D.C. (we again stress that the Government appoints its top bureaucrats) might be a means of enabling the employers to obstruct the policy of a Labour Government if it impinged on their interests. Would the N.E.D.C. be allowed to discuss the advisability or otherwise of the nationalisation of the steel industry, which has obviously something to do with the promotion of economic growth? In this situation the employers would almost certainly be against the proposal, and the T.U.C. is

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optimistic if it thinks that the full-time officials in the N.E.D.C. office are found to be in favour.

Suppose a Labour Government moves, as it ought, drastically to reduce the number of C. Licences, which permit firms to carry their own goods by road. Here the employers on the N.E.D.C. might have a more direct interest in opposing this measure—an essential component of the integrated transport system for which Labour stands.

## T.U.C. Vain Hopes

The Right Wing section of the General Council seems to think that because they will be allowed, through Neddy, to talk directly to the employers and the representatives of the Government, that this amounts to an increase in trade union influence and power.

Mr. Harry Douglass of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation told the Congress:

> "You will not be able to march by brute force to a higher standard of living: you will only get there by using your brains." *The way to get an increased standard of living is by going into the consultations that were available in the N.E.D.C.* It had been said that money is power. He believed that the people were power and they (the T.U.C.) represented the people. We have got the power and we do not know how to use it. *If you take these new tools in your grasp, and give instructions to your representatives, you will have a sure guarantee that the standard of living will increase*" (our emphasis).

If the Tory ad-men do not use such speeches in their General Election propaganda then they do not know their own dirty unscrupulous business. For was it not the Tory Government which set up this truly marvellous institution—the N.E.D.C. —through which the Trades Union Congress is going to accomplish such marvels. The economics and sociology of Mr. Douglass are truly marvellous. "Money is not power. People are power." Yet during 1962 a number of steel works went out of business; a number of others went on short time and steel workers' incomes took a sharp dip. Who decided this? The people who are power according to Mr. Douglass or the monopoly capitalist owners of the industry? Mr. Douglass knows perfectly well if he had raised this question of steel closures inside his wonderful N.E.D.C. it would not have made the slightest difference. The monopolists decided.

Mr. George Woodcock, the General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress, is obviously enthralled by the fleeting glimpses he has caught of the "corridors of power". The N.E.D.C. he told Congress was a further step in the process that had been going on for a long time:

> "They had sought to create a situation in which they dealt with affairs of the moment in committee rooms, with people who had power given to them by the electorate. *The whole work of the T.U.C. in his time had been centred on developing this process, on reshaping their views as practical views to be argued with intelligent, highly skilled men: seeking to develop a view and finding means of expounding it where it counted. The document did no more in general terms than to take this process a little further*" (our emphasis).

Again there is the idea that the unions can accomplish wonders if they are in a body which can talk to the employers and the Government—not merely a Labour Government, but *any* Government.

## Corridors of Power

Contrary to Mr. Douglass, the people are not power, but they are capable of developing organised strength and moving to the capture of political power. Yet the General Council is so enamoured with being allowed to talk to the Government and the employers that it has neglected the strengthening of working class organisation and the ability of the workers to influence the course of events.

In paragraph 44 of the General Council's supplementary report on "Economic Development and Planning" there is the following characterisation of the present situation of the movement:

> "The problems facing individual unions will vary. One problem will be recruitment. At present it is impossible to define with precision the degree of trade union organisation in any except a very few industries and little is known about the regional or occupational distribution of trade union membership. These are gaps that need to be filled. Unions also need more accurate knowledge of the effect on their members of such factors as mergers and the geographical redistribution of industry: this side of trade union research has never been satisfactorily developed."

If the General Council had spent half the time it now does on Productivity Councils and similar bodies, on helping the unions to build up their membership and in assisting them in fundamental research the movement would be a lot stronger and more influential in negotiations with individual employers and in any talks it cared to have with the Government, there would have been power behind its arguments. In fact wage negotiations with the employers have been rather unsuccessful in 1962 and 1963, and the number of male workers in trade unions covered by the Congress is actually declining. Evidently no con-

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versations "with intelligent highly skilled men" are going to compensate for neglect in developing trade union strength.

This is what comes from starting from the basis of a more or less eternal capitalist society, with industry served by "two sides" who can on most occasions arrive at agreements on what should be done with the Government occasionally intervening in sticky cases. Although the report acknowledges "a growth in the size of business units, not only in industry but in such services as retail distribution and transport", it has nothing to say about the wider implications of the growth of monopolies as centres of economic and political power and its accompanying concentration of Governmental power in the hands of the Prime Minister and the top people of the state bureaucracy, reflected in the weakening of Parliamentary Government. There is no mention of the fact that one side of industry—the monopolists—are bent on greatly increasing the mass of profit by the intensified exploitation of the workers, and on enabling more to be ploughed back into industry to promote further growth and further profits. It is this absence of a working class standpoint accompanied by acceptance of a view of present day capitalism, which would be shared by any managing director, that lies at the root of the T.U.C.'s acceptance of the N.E.D.C. as a great new way forward for the working class.

## Results so Far

Leaving aside the problem of wages and salaries for the moment, what other policies has the N.E.D.C. adopted, which should lead the Trade Union movement to put the slightest trust in it?

In the document on "Economic Development and Planning", we are told that Mr. Maudling, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, based his budget on the reports issued by N.E.D.C. The leading circles of the monopolists in Britain had, however, decided, before this body was formed, to seek an alternative to the "stop start" policy which has held back the British capitalist economy in relation to its leading rivals. In the N.E.D.C. was one of the components of this new "policy". It is doubtful as we will see, whether in fact it has found a real alternative to "stop-start". The General Council report informs us that the N.E.D.C. has also discussed "policies relating to education—labour mobility and redundancy, regional development, the balance of payments, taxation, the level of demand and prices and incomes". But all this is talk. The only definite things on which the N.E.D.C. has arrived at an agreement is a policy for the balance of payments and a policy which suggests the restriction of wages and salaries.

## Precarious Balance

Since 1945, but more particularly since 1951, Britain has been faced with continued crisis in its balance of payments with the outside world, which the Tories have tried to deal with by means of credit squeezes etc. The aim was to restrict the development of the home market in Britain and force the capitalists to devote greater efforts to increasing their share of foreign markets. In fact the general effect of this policy was to raise the costs of production in British industry, and so make the winning of foreign markets more difficult.

Amongst the reasons advanced in the General Council's report for the recurring crises in the balance of payments are: (1) "It is our failure to satisfy the more selective and demanding requirements of purchasers of manufactures that has led to the fall in our proportion of the world export of goods". (This is another way of saying that British capitalism is failing to supply overseas countries with the type of goods they want.) (2) "The deterioration in Britain's balance of invisible payments, in which the maintenance of extensive overseas defence commitments has played a significant part". (3) "The inadequacy of world reserves, particularly in the form of the provision of automatic credit"; (4) "the unreasonable burdens thrown on Britain's internal economic structure, by the present Sterling Area Arrangements".

Now all these factors which are mentioned by the General Council as affecting Britain's balance with the outside world are also mentioned in the Second Report of N.E.D.C. There are, however, no agreements on policies for dealing with them. The heavy overseas military expenditure must continue, we are told, until there is a change in Government policy. Adequate international reserves must wait upon a change in the regulations of the International Monetary Fund. In other words there is no agreement to remove any of the factors which have caused British monopoly capitalism's difficulties in the post-war period. The General Council may have its own views of these things, but the N.E.D.C. has not accepted them, nor has the Tory Government. Nor would a Labour Government do so on the basis of its present policy.

What the N.E.D.C. has suggested is a short-term palliative which might enable the economy to surmount one balance of payments crisis, and so give the Government a slightly longer breathing space. If the British economy got into a boom, in which its imports of foreign goods increased, the balance of payments might worsen. Instead of operating a Selwyn Lloyd policy of a credit

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squeeze, the Government is recommended to (1) impose restrictions on unnecessary imports and (2) raise foreign loans (which might be arranged beforehand) in order to pay for excess imports. The arguments in favour of this course are, that if the British economy was given three or four years, free from all stop-start policies, it might be able to reach a permanently higher level of production and a permanently higher level of exports. The Report makes it clear, however, that the measures above described are short-term expedients, and that if the exports do not rise sufficiently fast, then the old Selwyn Lloyd type of policy will have to be tried again.

This is the reply to those who argue that the General Council is not now supporting an old type of wage restraint policy, but is for wage restraint plus profits restraint plus planning. They insist that wage restraint is only asked to help the economy to take off into a phase of sustained boom, in which the workers will be able to obtain much higher wages than they are getting at this moment. What has been agreed to, however, are dubious short-term expedients, which could easily fail. There is absolutely no guarantee in the measures accepted by the N.E.D.C. that sustained expansion will take place. The N.E.D.C. targets if fully achieved will only increase Britain's meagre gold and currency reserves by £118 million by 1966. Yet the absence of sufficient reserves has been one of the weakest points in the economy. Clearly the balance of payments problem threatens to be with us in an acute form for years to come. So there is no guarantee that the N.E.D.C. policy will succeed and the impassioned supporters of "planning" who want the unions to accept wage restraint in the hope of benefits to come, are operating a bare-faced confidence trick.

### International "Restraint"

It is necessary to discuss "incomes policy" in its international setting. It is not true as is sometimes suggested, that this is a policy to deal with a specific British situation with reference to exports and balance of payments difficulties. In fact, all major capitalist Governments are now seeking to hold wages down, no matter what state their balance of payments is in. All of them are seeking to push their workers into an international beggar-my-neighbour contest.

In a speech of Mr. Douglas Dillon, Secretary of the U.S. Treasury, before the Joint Economic Committee of Congress he describes the fiercer competition rising out of "incomes policies".

"Over recent years the annual rate of wage increase in manufacturing industry has dropped steadily and for the past two years has been slightly below the yearly gains in productivity. That in turn has made possible a small decline in wholesale prices since 1960. Nevertheless, the major test lies ahead, as our economy returns closer to its full potential. That is why we have placed so much emphasis on the wage-price guideposts developed by the Council of Economic Advisers, as an appropriate benchmark for evaluating the longer-run behaviour of wages and prices." The National Council of Economic Advisers, on which the unions are represented, is the American equivalent of N.E.D.C.

Mr. Dillon gloats over the temporary success of this in relation to the Europeans. "Wages and prices in Europe have been rising for the last few years far more rapidly than in the United States, unit costs have been increasing, and profit margins have declined. This offers us an opportunity to compete more effectively." Evidently the Europeans are getting wise to all this because Mr. Dillon goes on:

> "European Governments are already exerting themselves to restrain wage increases through what has come to be known as 'incomes policy'. However, the natural inflationary forces are so powerful that their efforts have only succeeded in somewhat moderating the tempo of the inflationary process. *But should this process proceed to a point where European countries find their balances of payments to be endangered, we can expect them to take strong action irrespective of the domestic consequences*" (our emphasis).

So the effect of any one Government holding wages and salaries down, is to encourage the others to do likewise, with disastrous results. If the great monopolies inside the various countries are to try and sell more to foreign countries while buying less from them, they can only precipitate another international recession.

### Neddy and Wages

We can take it that state-imposed "incomes" policies will be pursued in all major countries in the present phase—state monopoly capitalism. What does that policy imply? In the past capitalist negotiators have usually argued that wage increases should not be granted unless there was an increase in production per worker employed, i.e. productivity. It was usually productivity within the framework of a given industry or trade that was taken into account. The new type of wages and salaries policy suggested by the N.E.D.C. and the N.I.C. takes as its criterion not the increase of the productivity of an industry or trade, but the increase in the productivity of the whole economy, which includes the productivity of the

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transport and service industries as well as manufacturing. Increases in the productivity of transport and services (difficult to estimate as they are) are usually below those in manufacture. So it is not the increase in the productivity of a worker's own industry or trade but the increase *in the economy as a whole* which must be taken into account.

It is perfectly possible for certain industries to register percentage increases in productivity in the ranges of from 4 per cent to 10 per cent. If the total increases of productivity over the economy as a whole is say 3 per cent, that is the limit of any possible increase, even if the increase in the productivity of a particular industry is much higher than this. The meaning of this wages and salaries policy is underlined by a statement of the National Incomes Commission which says "the fundamental rule will be that *all wage settlements* must reflect the overall national increase in productivity *and not the variations in the achievements of individual industries or firms*". Put in another way, it is the increase in the productivity of the economy as a whole, and not the productivity of any particular industry, which sets the upward limit of wage increases in all major wage settlements. In the past it has been suggested that it is the global increase in the wages and salaries bill which should be controlled and within that global total there should be varying wage increases. Such a policy would be impossible to operate so the N.E.D.C. and the National Incomes Commission have both suggested *that all wage settlements* be made dependent on the increase of the productivity of the economy as a whole and that there should be practically no exceptions to this rule.

The formula for wage increases suggested by N.E.D.C., and by the Labour Party through its mouthpiece Mr. James Callaghan is crystal clear. Until a few years ago increases in money wages in Britain averaged 5 or 6 per cent per year. The N.E.D.C. says that such increases are much too large and that, in future, they must be much lower—3 or $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent in the years ahead. This means that the workers in the industries of more than average productivity, have to restrain their wage demands, have not to ask for the type of increase that would be justified by the profits of their employers, but to accept a very low wage increase, based on the predictions of the N.E.D.C., or the Government Planning Board. *This is wage restraint.* The workers take less than they would otherwise be able to get by free collective bargaining, backed by their trade union strength.

But you could, if you were sufficiently unscrupulous, call this by another name. You could argue that as the limits of any wage increase are fixed by some planning body, that it is really a planned increase in wages. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the upper limits of money wage increases have been fixed by some planners, with the object of endeavouring to slow down wage increases, to ensure that they do not rise as rapidly in the future as they did in the recent past. This has been the aim of all Tory Chancellors since 1951. It is the aim of the N.E.D.C., the General Council and the Labour Party. The Tory Chancellors, however, called this policy by its real names, such as "wage restraint", or "wages pause". It was left to Mr. James Callaghan, and other Labour spokesmen to translate the obnoxious term "wage restraint" into "planned wage increases".

Some of the unions were appeased by the statement that a Labour Government would consult them before it operated this policy. True enough, but "planned increases in wages", like "wage restraint", means that the limit of wages increases in any given period is laid down on the basis of certain statistical data, compiled by the statisticians of N.E.D.C., aided under Labour by some Government Department. It is extremely unlikely that such bodies will change their predictions and be more generous in fixing limits for wage increases or that a Labour Government would regard such limits as negotiable. Although the outward forms of collective bargaining will be preserved, the actual bargaining will be reduced to a farce. There are possible ways of state fixing (the word "planning" is a misnomer) of money wage increases. They could be fixed at a higher level than has hitherto prevailed. This is emphatically rejected by the Labour and trade union leadership. Or they can be fixed at a much lower level. This is in fact the policy. It is a plan to reduce wage increases enormously.

To lower the rate at which money wages increase, is to lower the rate at which real wages, i.e. wages in terms of purchasing power increase. The statement that the "incomes policy" will speed up the rate at which real wages increase, as Mr. Callaghan suggests, is utter nonsense.

In the past unions have claimed increases in wages because (1) the productivity of the workers in a given industry has gone up, or (2) its profits have gone up, or (3) the wages being paid must keep their position relative to the wages and salaries being paid elsewhere, or (4) there should be a wage increase to compensate for a previous rise in the cost of living. All these justifications for an increase in wages which have been put forward in the past would be wiped out. Only increases related to the productivity of the

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economy as a whole would be permitted. So if women workers wanted a higher than average increase in wages in order to close the gap between women's wages and men's wages, or lower-paid workers wanted an increase for the same reason, it would not be granted under the N.E.D.C. wages formula.

In many industries workers are on incentive wages and receive an increase in their wage rates, plus an increase in their earnings, based on an incentive scheme, related in some way to their productivity. Such schemes would in quite a number of cases be quite incompatible with the wages formula which we are now discussing. The same is true of increases in wages based on movements of the cost of living index. These raise vast questions. The report on "Economic Development and Planning" suggests that "unions will need to consider whether their present patterns and methods of collective bargaining are satisfactory, or whether tactical action on a local level can be integrated into general strategy for securing improvements in wages and other benefits". Does this mean giving up factory actions for improvements? The General Council seems to say so.

### Profits will Rise

If you hold back increases in wages and salaries in industry of high and growing productivity, you automatically increase the rent, interest and profit being appropriated by the big capitalist firms. So Governments seeking to appease the workers have shifted their position and declared that they are willing to restrain the growth of profits also.

However, while there is a clear-cut way of restraining the growth of wages and salaries, no clear-cut way of restraining the growth of profits of all the varied capitalist firms has yet been presented for consideration. The first suggestion is that if following wage restraint, larger than usual profits are earned, they will be cut back by taxation. In other words while the workers are expected to operate within a permissible level of wage increases (3 to 3½ per cent per annum) the capitalist firms are to be allowed to earn as much profit as they can. The Government, maybe in association with the N.E.D.C., will judge whether the mass of profit so earned is excessive and to what extent, if any, it will be cut back by taxation. The workers' restraint is to be watertight. The profits restraint is to be nebulous.

Another suggestion is that the large firms which are benefiting from wage restraint should cut their prices and by doing so limit their profits. There is no suggestion that they should be forced to do so by some kind of price regulation.

The Labour Party suggestions which have been made up till now generally favour some kind of dividends restraint plus a capital gains tax. It is recognised that dividend restraint by itself is a complete fraud. The money not distributed in dividends remains in the hands of the companies, who may use it to extend their plant, or to buy up other firms. Sooner or later this expresses itself in higher share prices. The shareholders will get the extra profits arising from wage and salary restraint, not in the form of dividends, but in the form of untaxed capital gains. So there are a number of suggestions that the Government might even things up by some kind of capital gains tax but Mr. Callaghan has as yet no concrete policy. But here the Federation of British Industries rushes in to warn that restraint of profits in any shape or form is a very chancy thing indeed in a capitalist society. How is one to distinguish profits which are a by-product of wage restraint from profits which would result from an increase of sales, due to the success of the latest model of motor-car, washing machine or what have you? Clearly the capitalists while enthusiastically supporting wage restraint are going to find a million and one reasons for making profits restraint a purely nominal gesture.

It has been argued that, if the Government is not prepared to make profits restraint real, then the unions are not bound to accept wage and salaries restraint and nothing has been lost.

### Already Wage Restraint

On the contrary the last two years has seen the virtual acceptance by employers and arbitration boards of the Government's "guiding light" for keeping wage rises within the 3-3½ per cent level. There is in practice a wage restraint policy being operated by the employers and the Government and is being virtually accepted by the trade union leadership while, of course, profits are under no restraint whatever.

In the last three years the British worker has been having a very thin time with regard to wage increases. In 1955, 1956 and 1957 the average weekly increases in wage rates amount to £5,153 million, £6,633 million and £5,340 million respectively. In 1960, 1961 and 1962 the average weekly increase in wage rates has been £4,303 million, £4,116 million and £5,232 million respectively. Yet between 1955 and 1962 the cost of living increased by 26 per cent.

In spite of this sharp fall in the rate of wage increases the N.E.D.C. is demanding that they fall still further. "There will thus be a need for policies to ensure that money incomes (wages, salaries and profits) as a whole rise less rapidly

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than in the past," it says. The Labour Party Conference presents this as "planned wage increases".

This is where the Labour and trade union experts on wages policy have brought us; a *de facto* policy of wages restraint being enforced everywhere; the wage increases of the British workers being the lowest in Western Europe, and not the vestige of an incomes policy being applied to rent, interest and profit. Indeed this *de facto* wage restraint is probably responsible for the low demand for consumer goods in the British home market and the consequent refusal of capitalists in this sector to engage in any further modernisation of their industries. This has been one of the reasons for the stagnation of the economy in the recent period.

Incomes policy theorists, particularly those inside the trade union movement and the Labour Party, will no doubt accept the *de facto* wages restraint and proceed to argue for a policy of profits restraint to accompany it, especially under a Labour Government. No attention should be paid to these people. They have had the ear of the trade union bureaucracy and have supported policies which have got the movement into a morass. The unions' aim must be to abandon wage restraint and climb out of the morass, not to get deeper into it by pursuing the will-o'-the-wisp of an incomes policy.

## What To Do

The unions must follow the rejection of wages restraint at the Trades Union Congress by launching a drive for substantial wage increases immediately. At the moment the engineering employers are dragging out the negotiations for a wages increase and will in the end offer a trivial one. Yet this industry is beginning to expand once more, and a determined stand for wage increases could probably extract much better results than have been obtained in recent years.

The unions which are well placed for extracting wage increases, must extend a helping hand to the less well-organised workers in the less profitable industries. It is these workers who now and then entertain illusions about the possibility of developing in capitalist society a wages policy which will fix wages according to some criterion of social justice, pulling down the higher paid and elevating the lower paid. This type of policy would virtually destroy trade unionism. Fortunately it is completely impracticable. However, the idea is widespread that there is a fixed wages and salaries pool and the more one group of workers get the less there is available for others. This is completely untrue. If wage increases are limited in the strongly organised industries, this means more profits for the employers in those industries. It does not release money which would be available for increasing wages in low-paid occupations.

The trade union movement will put itself in very great danger, however, if it operates on the basis of every industry for itself, forgetting the vital principle of working class solidarity. The gap between the well-paid and the poorly paid workers is outrageously large. This is particularly the case in relation to women's wages and salaries. The gap can be narrowed by working class action industrially and politically. The stronger unions through the T.U.C. and the Trades Councils must help the weaker unions to recruit and build up their strength. The T.U.C. must turn the searchlight of publicity on those firms and industries which are trying to survive by paying starvation wages. In certain industries, combined action of the movement as a whole must be used to push up basic minimum wages. It is this principle of solidarity which must be basic policy.

So two wage policies are in sharp conflict. A Neddy and Labour Conference type of wages policy which would hold back the better-organised workers, without in any way helping the lower paid. Its total effect would be to change the distribution of income to the benefit of the monopolists.

The other policy is for the workers in the best strategical positions to reject all types of wage restraint and to strive for the greatest possible wage increases. At the same time they must recognise the need to unite the whole trade union movement, by helping the lower paid to win more substantial wage increases and to develop their organised strength. Reject wage restraint and operate the principle of solidarity are the pillars of a militant policy on wages.

There are, however, very definite limits to pursuing a rational wages policy, in capitalist society, while to talk about an "incomes" policy where the working people are exploited by the monopolists is senseless. A rational incomes policy involves the ending of capitalist exploitation, through the conquest of political power and the taking over of the land and the industries of the country. On the way to the realisation of this aim, the workers' movement must keep itself independent, not allowing itself to be entangled with the political or economic institutions of the monopolists. That is the only way to a genuine policy of planning and of economic growth in the interests of the people.

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# Progress and Problems in Ghana

*By David Grove*

WITH the publication of the draft seven year plan (due to go into operation in October this year) Ghana is poised for another stride in the long march towards independence. Developments in Ghana have a number of novel, complex, and rapidly changing features; this article will try to analyse some of the forces at work without attempting to draw all the theoretical and practical conclusions.

Among the reasons why the progressive movement in Britain should study the experience of Ghana are :

1. Ghana faces new problems common to a number of African territories—problems that will become more and more important as other countries seek the road to economic independence. What is happening in Ghana can help us to understand the significance of "national democracy" as a stage in the development of ex-colonial countries in the present world situation.
2. Ghana has been the victim of many unscrupulous attacks in the capitalist press, which has sought by its distortions to prevent the British labour movement uniting in support of the advance of the African people, and to divide Ghana from her political friends and allies in Africa and elsewhere.

## Tory Hopes Thwarted

Ghana's independence was wrested from British imperialism by the united struggle of its people. Yet when the Tory Government finally bowed to the demand for freedom in 1957 they hoped that Ghana would prove as favourable a field for the new colonialism as the Gold Coast had once been for the old.

Many British officials and teachers remained in positions of great influence.

These neo-colonialist hopes have been largely thwarted. The new government abolished the regional assemblies, took firm measures against subversive actions by the opposition and against foreigners who abused their stay in Ghana. In 1960 the country became a republic (still within the Commonwealth); Nkrumah — by an overwhelming majority—was elected head of state and of government. Ghanaians were rapidly promoted to most of the senior posts in the civil service and the armed forces.

## Ghana's Foreign Policy

But such measures were not the real reason for capitalist press stories of dictatorship, inefficiency and bankruptcy. What do the press lords care for the civil liberties of Iraqi democrats or the welfare of Cuban peasants? What worried them about Ghana was the government's independent anti-imperialist foreign policy. In the very year after independence the first conference of free African states (then only eight in number) and the first All-African People's Conference were held in Accra. The capital of Ghana became the capital of African liberation. In 1959 Ghana went to the support of newly independent Guinea. In 1960 she backed Lumumba in the Congo. In 1961 Nkrumah strongly opposed apartheid in South Africa at the Commonwealth Premiers' Conference, and in that year he made an extensive tour of the Soviet Union and other socialist lands. Ghana banned trade with Portugal and played a leading part in the formation of the All-African Trade Union Federation which set itself against the neo-colonialist activities of the I.C.F.T.U. In 1962 Accra was the scene of three great meetings : an international peace conference under the slogan : "The World Without the Bomb"; a rally of "freedom fighters" from all the remaining colonial territories in the continent; and the first congress of Africanist scholars from all over the world. Ghana has opposed any association of African countries with the European Common Market, and in the United Nations has consistently voted for the restoration to People's China of her lawful seat.

In speech after speech Dr. Nkrumah has hammered home the arguments for African unity. Ghana's pioneering role on this vital issue began to bear fruit when the African heads of state met and agreed at Addis Ababa in May. The charter of the Organisation of African Unity,

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backed by the resolutions against colonialism, foreign alliances and military bases, can be an important step towards the political union that Nkrumah advocates.

This is a remarkable record for a small, relatively undeveloped country that was until recently a colony of British imperialism. As Mikhail Kremnyev wrote in *World Marxist Review* (April 1963) : "An independent foreign policy, based on peaceful co-existence and active struggle against imperialism on the international arena, enables the non-aligned states to play a bigger role in world affairs."

## Policy at Home

The imperialists have also become more and more worried about the development of the C.P.P.'s home policy. They fear it will lead to the ending of imperialist domination of Ghana's economy. Although the advance of socialism and national liberation and inter-imperialist rivalries have forced the imperialists to make genuine concessions to the newly independent nations, they have not given up hope of continuing to draw vast profits from the labour of the African people. They are trying to use their considerable ideological influence—especially over the educated sections — to moderate the radical policies of Nkrumah's government, and — if need be — to prepare the way for more drastic steps to maintain their grip on the economy.

The seven year plan marks a new stage in the long and difficult process of trying to end imperialist exploitation and build an independent national economy. It is the highest point so far of a process that began six years before independence when the first C.P.P. government set about the task of ending colonial backwardness. That was the time of exceptionally high prices for Ghana's foremost export : cocoa. Large funds were accumulated and invested almost entirely in social services. Between 1951 and 1961 the number of children at primary schools more than trebled, the number of students at secondary schools grew more than five times, and at universities in Ghana almost six times. An increasing number of Ghanaians have been sent abroad to continue their studies, and now almost as many go to the socialist countries as to the west.

By 1961 there were two-and-a-half times as many hospital beds as in 1951 and more than three times as many doctors. Two thousand miles of new main roads had been built — a 60 per cent increase. Since 1961 there have been further advances; primary education is now compulsory and next term school text books will be issued free. These are impressive achievements—though the government is well aware they are no more than a beginning. There are only 24,000 secondary school pupils (out of some half a million in the age group), and only one doctor to every 14,000 people. Less than half the population have a pure and regular water supply.

The changes since 1951 have not only raised standards of health and education but have also greatly increased the employment opportunities; there has been a big growth in the number of wage and salary earners. Average wages and salaries are about 50 per cent higher than ten years ago, and though prices have also risen, there seems to have been a substantial increase in real earnings. But the majority of Ghanaians are individual farmers, traders and craftsmen, or small employers. Perhaps increases in imports at present give the best indication of their changing standards. Between 1950 and 1960 the value of clothing imported increased ten times, of footwear eight times and of soap four times. There have been increases in the import of other manufactured consumer goods but the totals are still very small; there are only about 25,000 private cars (including taxis and official cars) among seven million people. The figures tend to confirm the impression that there has been a general increase in living standards, but that a few small sections — higher officials and politicians, the intelligentsia, businessmen and the bigger cocoa farmers — have gained much more than the average. These sections have great influence in the C.P.P. though some of them may have reservations about its more radical policies.

Alongside this expansion of the social services there have been major innovations like Ghana Airways, the Black Star shipping line, the great new port of Tema, fine public buildings in Accra and other centres — all paid for out of Ghana's own resources and paving the way for the independent national economy of the future.

## Economic Problems

But these advances were not matched by any structural changes in the productive base necessary to sustain them. The Second Development Plan (adopted 1959, scrapped 1961) had proposed the building of 600 factories in five years, but it relied mainly on private investment to achieve the target. But there was little increase in investment by Ghanaian or foreign capitalists. The performance of the newly established state and state-private sectors was also disappointing. When the Industrial Development Corporation was wound up in 1961 only six out of thirty-one enterprises were working at a profit; the main reason was inefficient and sometimes corrupt management.

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The number of jobs failed to increase as fast as the number of school leavers, and unemployment mounted in the towns. Improvements in agriculture were mainly in export crops while food production lagged behind the growing demand. Britain and the U.S.A. stalled for several years on the loans Ghana sought for the great Volta River hydro-electric and aluminium project.

Even after independence Ghana's economic growth was still determined largely by the international division of labour established under imperialism. This was sharply demonstrated when cocoa prices began to fall from their high post-war level, and the terms of trade moved against the raw material producing countries, i.e. resumed their long-term trend. A volume of exports that sold for £100 in 1954 fetched only £70 in 1962, while imports formerly valued at £100 cost £107. The result was a mounting deficit in the balance of foreign payments — reaching £44 million in 1961. Reserves were down to £75 million and there was a growing budget deficit. Following trade union pressure there were big wage increases at the end of 1960; the minimum was raised to 6s. 6d. a day.

The Ghana government could have solved its immediate financial problems by going cap in hand to western governments or the world bank. No doubt money would have been forthcoming—on condition that development plans were cut down, a "free" economy maintained, and the edge taken off Ghana's anti-imperialist foreign policy. But this would have been to go the old style South American way; and Dr. Nkrumah had often warned that Africa must learn from the experience of Latin America. There was growing awareness of the menace of neo-colonialism and C.P.P. activists were pressing for more radical policies.

## Seven-Year Plan

So in 1961 there came on the one hand a budget introducing import and exchange controls, purchase tax and compulsory savings; and on the other hand draft agreements with socialist countries for loans of £100 million, the setting up of a Ministry of Industries and a Planning Commission, and the invitation to a Hungarian economist to help in the preparation of a seven year plan. Following these steps—and the crushing of a reactionary conspiracy — the British and American governments finally agreed to the loans for the Volta project.

Now, the draft seven year plan seeks to lay the foundations for the complete transformation of the economy. By contrast with the two previous development plans which, as the draft states, were "largely limited to programmes of public works and social development, the new plan has a wide concern for the growth of the economy as a whole". This does not mean that it formulates precise targets and means of fulfilling them for every branch of productive activity. There are a number of reasons why it falls short of this. The necessary statistics of employment, output etc., are still being collected for the first time in Ghana. There is little knowledge of the techniques of economic planning, and advice is not always sought from those best qualified to give it. The government does not yet have enough control over every sector to enforce a comprehensive plan. And the achievement of the overall targets depends upon a considerable supply of capital from abroad.

The plan aims at a rate of economic growth 5.5 per cent per annum. This is high — but some observers believe that an even higher rate will be needed permanently to overcome the deficits in the balance of payments and the state budget.

Great emphasis is laid on agriculture. This is not because the authors of the plan share the reactionary view that Ghana must remain a primarily agricultural country; on the contrary. But, as they say, "during the next two decades the rate of growth of agriculture will condition the rate of growth of the whole economy". More produce is required from the land to cut out the £26 million of food imports (almost three times the level of ten years ago); to feed the rapidly growing population and to improve their diet; and to provide raw materials, capital and a growing market for industry. State farms — of which several have already been started, some with Soviet aid—will have a strategic role in clearing new land and pioneering large-scale cultivation, but the bulk of production is still expected to come from peasant farmers. Co-operation is to be encouraged but the forms it will take are not specified.

The plan proposes that the farmers should be assisted with scientific advice, better seeds and livestock, machine and tractor stations, and larger credit facilities. But it is envisaged that most of the productive investment will come from the farmers themselves. Two questions arise. Will the capital that is mostly now in the hands of the wealthier cocoa farmers be invested in other lines —e.g. cereals, for which very high targets have been set—without more active state intervention than the plan envisages? Will not the emphasis on private investment lead to increased capitalist exploitation in the countryside, breaking up the

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traditional communities (e.g. ending communal land ownership), and hampering the growth of socialist relationships?

What seems to be needed is political and social leadership to stimulate the initiative of the poorer farmers and mobilise them for a great leap forward. Communal labour is a well-established feature of African village life. In recent years with the assistance of the government many schools, post offices, street drains and other improvements have been built by self-help. Can the same methods not be used to direct into more productive activities the vast amount of time and energy now expended in carrying water, pounding grains and root crops, head-loading produce to market, and clearing the bush with cutlass and hoe?

### Stages of Industrialisation

Much more money is to be invested in industry than in agriculture. The stages of industrialisation are envisaged as:

1. The production of staple consumer goods and basic building materials, saving foreign exchange and processing more of Ghana's own materials.
2. Metal and chemical industries.
3. Machine building and electronics.

The first stage is already under way. Recently opened at Kumasi is an impressive factory that will eventually produce more than half Ghana's annual requirement of cocoa bags from fibre grown in the country. Among the twenty-five factories in the state and state-private sectors included in the 1962-3 estimates are cocoa processing plants at the two ports—Takoradi and Tema, a shoe factory, two sugar refineries, and several other food processing plants. Several projects are being built with loans and technical assistance from socialist countries. Some are being undertaken jointly by the Ghana government and private firms from West Germany, the Netherlands, and other capitalist countries.

The second and third stages of industrialisation will not be reached during the first seven year plan. Only large-scale economic co-operation with other African countries can create a market big enough to support basic industry. Ghana is still a small country — the size of Britain but with only one-seventh the population. She has no oil or coal. She is surrounded by smaller and even less developed countries. Only eight of the thirty-two independent African states have a bigger population than Ghana. As Dr. Nkrumah told the Addis Ababa summit meeting: "We need unified economic planning for Africa . . . Only on a continental basis shall we be able to plan the proper utilisation of all our resources for the full development of our continent." In this connection we should remember that the rapid progress of the former Czarist colonies in central Asia was not due to socialism alone, but to solialism plus integration in the mighty Soviet economy. There is solid economic justification for Ghana's call for African union.

In the field of social services the draft plan proposes to spend £61 million on education — twice as much as on health and three times as much as on housing. Despite the high incidence of disease and the high rents for single rooms in the towns, these are the right priorities in a country where in 1960 three-quarters of the adult population had never been to school, and where all advances depend upon building up a skilled labour force. Several millions are to be spent on establishing a television system; this may seem a luxury—but it can become a powerful agent of mass education of social and political unity.

### Where is the Money to Come From?

The target for total investment during the seven years is £840 million, of which about three-quarters will be productive — a very high proportion. The state will undertake about half the total investment, and of this about half will be productive (agriculture, industry, and power), and about half for infrastructure and social services. Although these will be a smaller proportion of total investment than in the past, the amount will be greater in absolute terms and will lead to bigger increases in recurrent expenditure. Ghana already has more roads, railways, port facilities, hospitals, schools and universities in relation to its size than any other African country. Further non-productive investment will have to be strictly limited to the amount that can be supported by increases in production.

Of the total productive investment, about two-fifths will be by the state, two-fifths by Ghanaian private investors, and the remaining fifth is intended to come from foreign private investors. The government will also need to borrow about £300 million from abroad. The volume of private investment in production will, therefore, be greater than that of the state, though the latter's share of the total will, of course, grow more quickly. A new Capital Investment Act offers inducements to foreign investors, including up to ten years without taxes and guaranteed remission of profits. It also establishes a board whose aim will be to ensure that foreign investments serve the objectives of the plan. Ghana's government believes that its improvement of the basic services has created favourable opportunities for private investment; as the plan says: "The immediate

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result of government's investments and external borrowings for the construction of the Volta River Project will be to provide power which will enable VALCO, a private group of foreign investors, to run an aluminium smelter."

Ghana still needs private capital from abroad—but Dr. Nkrumah has warned that the country cannot rely too heavily on it. In his 1961 Christmas message he stated three objections:

1. Industries in which the largest profits can be made may not be the ones that best serve Ghana's interests.
2. Profits will be exported instead of being ploughed back into Ghana's industry.
3. "If we relied exclusively or even largely upon foreign private investment for our industrialisation, we would in fact become politically and economically dependent upon expatriate interests. Indeed, all we should be doing would be to reintroduce colonialism in another guise."

Ghana must heed not only the experience of Latin America but of such a country as India where dependence on foreign capital has led to failure to reach planned targets and to the growing influence of reactionary elements.

## Capitalist or Non-Capitalist Development?

Ghana's declared aim is socialism; but this first plan will not settle the question whether the country will take capitalist or non-capitalist path of development. "Any suggestion that vigorous state and private sectors within the same economy are incompatible is historically incorrect," says the draft plan; and again: "For controlling the general movements of the economy and the utilisation of the nation's output for socially purposeful ends, the government, like any other government in the world, has at its disposal the usual weapons of monetary, fiscal, and legislative policy." The present seven year plan is a plan for building the basis of an independent national economy. In April, 1961, Dr. Nkrumah said: "We have still to lay the actual foundations upon which socialism can be built." How far it will be necessary to advance towards socialism in order to secure economic independence remains to be decided by the Ghanian people and their leaders.

Some progressives will wonder whether an independent economy can be built without nationalising the big foreign firms: the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation (almost a million pounds profit last year), the diamond monopoly (planning to invest £3 million in the next few years), the two British banks, and the United Africa Company (reducing its trading activities but investing in plywood, brewing, soap, vehicle assembly). But is nationalisation an immediate issue? Ghana naturally wants to find the smoothest way forward in the present international situation. The government knows it is competing with many other developing countries for western capital. When unity is consolidated Africa will be able to pursue more radical policies without fear of reprisals. As Dr. Nkrumah said at Addis Ababa: "Our bargaining power would be infinitely greater."

There are other considerations. Ghana is desperately short of good managers and technicians and cannot do without those employed by foreign firms, and — much more important — the training they will give to Ghanaians. Then it must be remembered that the main means of imperialist exploitation and control in Ghana has not been direct investment as in some African countries, but non-equivalent exchange of manufactured goods for the products of peasant farmers, and the monopoly of wholesale trade by a dozen great European companies. Measures to diversify agriculture and hasten industrialisation are the main answer to the first problem. The draft plan is silent about the control of trade, but the C.P.P. programme *Work and Happiness* adopted in 1962 at its most recent national congress—talks of the ultimate establishment of a state trading monopoly. Last year the government bought out two of the foreign commercial firms which became the nucleus of the Ghana National Trading Corporation. It is not yet clear what role it will play in the struggle for economic independence.

## Unity of Ghanaian People

The seven year plan will have behind it the powerful national movement of the Ghanaian people. Every imperialist and reactionary attempt to break their unity has failed. In view of the havoc wrought by disunity in the Congo or British Guiana, Ghana's unity is all the more remarkable and valuable. It is worth preserving even at the cost of temporary compromise with those sections who may not be in full sympathy with radical policies. The form and extent of concessions is one of the big responsibilities of national leadership today.

The political expression of Ghana's unity is the Convention People's Party, with its 2,500,000 members (well over half the adult population), and with the Trade Union Congress, the National Council of Ghana Women, and the United Ghana Farmers' Council as "integral wings". In form the C.P.P. is a highly centralised party; in content it is a national front uniting all anti-imperialist classes in Ghana. Naturally many points of view are to be found among its members and supporters. The Party's ultimate aim is Socialism.

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but Nkrumah has said: "We cannot build socialism without socialists." However, there are various opinions on the meaning of socialism and the way to achieve it. The colonialists did all they could to prevent the Ghanaian people learning anything of socialism. Now the neo-colonialists try to counter the great prestige of socialist ideas by distorting them. And they have considerable influence through their representatives in the educational system and the many western experts in Ghana. The *New Ashanti Times,* published by the owners of one of the richest gold mines in Africa, claims to speak for Ghana's "true friends". It recently tried to drive a wedge between Nkrumaism and Marxist scientific socialism, and was sharply answered by *The Spark,* organ of the Bureau of African Affairs.

The Kwame Nkrumah Institute of Economics and Political Science has been set up to educate C.P.P. leaders and activists in the principles of socialism. It is intended that political education should be extended to the mass of Party members. Scientific socialism will become a more and more powerful ideological force in Ghana as its supporters succeed in applying the universal principles of Marxism to the specific conditions of their country—analysing the class structure; identifying the special needs and interests of each group (e.g. the rich, middle and poor farmers); finding the policies that can unite all the anti-imperialist sections for the next steps in economic independence and national democracy; and charting a Ghanaian path to socialism.

## A Complex Process

It will not be easy to achieve the targets set in the seven year plan. There can be no big increases in living standards during the period when the foundations of economic independence are being laid. The draft says that until 1975 "most of the increases in the nation's output will have to be reinvested and will not be available for private or public consumption." It is proposed that private consumption should increase by 3.3 per cent per year; as the population is growing by about 2.5 per cent per year there is little margin for increasing per capita consumption. This policy will not succeed, says the draft, "unless it has the wholehearted support of all sections of the community . . . The sacrifice of the wage earners must be matched by sacrifices on the part of recipients of other types of income. Policies regarding profits, dividends and rents will be so managed that the recipients of such incomes also make an appropriate contribution to savings required in the economy".

As with so many African states the boundaries of Ghana were drawn by the imperialists. They brought the old Gold Coast under a single administration but used tribal rivalries and disproportionate development to keep the people divided. A national market is only now coming into being and a national language has not evolved; English is the official language — but most Ghanaians do not speak it and to all it is a foreign tongue. Independence was achieved before a national consciousness was fully developed. So Ghana has the difficult task of building a new nation while on the one hand ensuring respect for the language and culture of the Ewes, the Gas, the various Akan groups, and the peoples of the north, and on the other hand fostering loyalty to Africa as a whole.

This is only one aspect of the complex process of transforming many scattered groups of subsistence farmers using primitive techniques and guided by traditional social customs into a nation of skilled industrial and agricultural workers. The change is well under way. But because it began in an atmosphere of capitalist values engendered by colonialism it has led among some sections to the low level of public morality castigated by President Nkrumah in his May Day broadcast this year. All over Ghana one can see modern petrol stations run by one or other of the four competing oil companies, blazing with light from their private generator, and surrounded by mud houses dimly lit by a single paraffin lamp. Such sights are not just a contrast between two levels of technique but a symbol of two sets of values. The old ways will go, and are fast going. The question is whether they will be brutally broken up by selfish individualism or whether they can be transformed into community values of a new and higher order. Rudeness, laziness, money-grabbing and other social evils will not be easily rooted out — foreign as they are to the traditional character of the Ghanaian people. The seven year plan lays great stress on payment by results, and this socialist principle can be the foundation of a new morality — if it is clearly seen to apply to all sections of society. Forms of collective action such as workers' participation in management and in the control of plan fulfilment will have to be developed to overcome tendencies to bureaucracy and corruption.

Critical questions will arise as the plan unfolds. Foreign private investment may exceed expectations and some voices will call for a slowing down of development in the state sector. Or it may fall short of expectations and the question will be whether to lower the targets in the plan, to drive harder bargains for public loans from the west, or to seek further aid from socialist countries. The neo-colonialists lose no opportunity of exaggerating some of the very real difficulties of ex-

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tending trade and economic co-operation with the socialist lands. There are problems of inexperience on both sides, of language, of differences in technical standards and range of goods, of the smaller possibilities of private profit from socialist deals. These could all be sources of disunity in the national movement, but with goodwill and a clear perspective they can be overcome. Ghana will beware of relying too heavily on training schemes, expert assistance, and similar developments that tend to tie the economy to the use of equipment and methods from the capitalist sphere.

These are just a few of the problems that will have to be faced in carrying through, refining and improving the seven year plan. Will Ghana be allowed to complete the task without outside interference or internal strife? Last year's bomb attacks on the President and on patriotic crowds show that some reactionary opponents of the C.P.P. are prepared to create chaos in their attempt to hold back progress. But they also show that such elements cannot hope to win any democratic support. However, if the plan runs into unforeseen difficulties and if the masses are not convinced of the need to bend every effort to ensure its success, then there could be a mass basis for reactionary opposition to the present policies. In such a situation neo-colonialist forces would use all their influence to procure a region more favourable to their interests. The strike at Takoradi in 1961 showed that workers who are not completely convinced of the determination of the government to carry out its promises can become the victims of reactionary plotters. The ever greater extension of democratic processes, the drawing of the mass of the people into the discussion and implementation of the party's policies, can ensure that neo-colonialism is unable to turn to its advantage any crises that arise.

## Political Leadership

Ghanaian patriots will work above all to ensure the success of the seven year plan. For it is this that can unite many diverse sections for the immediate tasks while at the same time strengthening the forces that will resolve some of the contradictions ready for future advances. Though there will be some growth of capitalist elements, the working class will increase more than any other section. Nkrumah has said: "From the ranks of the workers must come the most devoted and active party cadres." The working class played a decisive part in the struggle for independence — particularly through the Positive Action strikes in 1950 — but it is still small in numbers and lacking in experience. There are now about half a million employed persons in Ghana — about a fifth of the total labour force — but the industrial proletariat is still small. As a result of the building of state sectors in industry and agriculture the working class will become increasingly concentrated and in touch with modern technique. In carrying through the plan it will establish new links with the farmers and the intelligentsia.

In her six years of independence Ghana has made a big name on the world stage. Her representatives have won respect in the United Nations and many other international bodies. Her ships have flown the red, yellow and green flag with the black star of Africa in the ports of the Atlantic, the Baltic and the Mediterranean. All over the great African continent fighters for national liberation are grateful for Ghana's support. At home the construction of the mighty Volta dam is a year ahead of schedule and Ghana will soon be one of the few countries in the world with a surplus of electric power. The three universities are preparing to turn out a much greater number of scientists and teachers. The seven year plan is by far the greatest challenge put before the Ghanaian people. The balance of world forces is moving all the time in Ghana's favour; the advance of socialism and the crisis of imperialism make it even easier for newly emerging nations to follow a truly independent policy. Ghana needs devoted socialists at every level from the higher civil service to the village development committee, consolidating and deepening the unity that has been built up around her most devoted citizen—Kwame Nkrumah. The plan will not be achieved without many stresses and strains, but if it is successfully carried through Ghana will be well on the way to economic independence and will be able to continue her progressive role in world affairs and make still greater contributions to the advance of united Africa.

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**Discussion contribution on:**

# What Does Music Express?

*Jack Dunman*

ALAN BUSH and Thomas Russell are in direct conflict over the relation between Music and Nationality, and the discussion ought to clear this point up.

Comrade Bush states that "music must have national characteristics", and that this is "an inevitable implication of Marxist theory". Comrade Russell replies that this to him, "seems thoroughly far fetched", and is supported by Jane Corbett, among others. It appears to me that Comrade Bush has in fact adequately given the basic reasons for his thesis, but evidently the case needs to be made again, and at greater length.

Those of us who studied the controversy about the Arts and Philosophy in the late 1940's have mostly accepted this part of the case made out by Zhdanov, while disagreeing with the manner in which he made it, and with others of his conclusions. But it is not an obvious truth, and in fact appears to conflict with basic socialist beliefs and emotions. Many of us come to socialism partly as a reaction against chauvinism and nationalism; and because the brotherhood of man, internationalism, could only be realised under Socialism, we proclaim "Internationalism" as our ideal. How comes it, then, that we ask our creative artists to be "nationalists" in their work?

### Internationalism and Music

The answer to this conundrum is in the difference between internationalism and *cosmopolitanism*. Marxists do not want the obliteration of national differences; being dialecticians, they understand that brotherhood means a close relationship between *different* peoples. Internationalism means co-operation and friendship between *different* nations. Literature has to be national because of language, although different nations develop their own literature even if they happen to use the same language. But no one could say that humanity would be the richer if national literatures were all translated into Esperanto, and then the originals forgotten. No offence to an international language in general; the world needs one and will probably have one one day, all the quicker under socialism. But world literature is the richer because each nation contributes something *special* to it; and long may it so remain.

But, Tom Russell and Jane Corbett will say, music is not expressed in any particular language; it has actually been called an "international language" and binds peoples together. Why should we actually try to differentiate the music of different nations? Individuals can appreciate foreign music without having to take the trouble to learn a special language, and "internationalism" is strengthened without effort.

This brings us back to the main point: Internationalism is the intertwining of different nations: *it is not the abolition of nations.* I have used the words "appreciate" and "without effort"—Tom Russell and Jane Corbett will be among the first to agree that musical appreciation does not come without effort: musical appreciation will be all the deeper if people have taken the trouble to understand how the music expresses the culture, history and characteristics of the nation which has produced it. In fact, musical appreciation is stunted and reduced if this does not happen. Of course great music also in a sense transcends national differences; but this does not affect the argument. It has to do so from its national basis.

This is the basic reason why Marxism considers that "music must have national characteristics"—though I would think "character" is a better

**MARXISM TODAY FORUM**

on

**MARXISM AND MORAL LAW**

Dr. D. SOPER

Dr. J. LEWIS

**Friday, 6th December, 1963, at 7.30 p.m.**

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word. Michael Hurd put it very well in his life of Rutland Boughton (*Immortal Hour*):

> "Like so many of his contemporaries Boughton felt that English music needed to speak boldly with an English voice and saw in folksong the key that might help to bring this about."

We English should be particularly concerned about this. Always prone to boast about what we should be ashamed of, and to be unaware of our really creditable achievements, we have never taken a proper pride in our own music, or for that matter our painting. In the nineteenth century, as Tom Russell agrees, this was carried to absurd lengths by the bourgeoisie, with their veneration for the Germans as the great musical nation and coldness and contempt for our own men, past or present. We are far from having overcome the effects of this today. But Parry, Stanford and others refused to repudiate their heritage and their battle was crowned with a victory still incompletely acknowledged, when their disciple, Vaughan Williams, became—as some of us think—the greatest composer of his age. He was consciously, militantly English—the most English that we have produced; and by being so, he also achieved universality.

Would the world have been richer if he had accepted as his life's aim the first instruction that Ravel gave him when he went to him to get a little "French polish", as he put it—"Write me a little minuet in the style of Mozart"! Incidentally, in his book, *National Music*, Vaughan Williams said all and more than Zhdanov said on the subject, much better, and in a way totally acceptable to musicians.

### Connections with the People

There are other reasons why the national character of music is important to us Communists. We think our art and our music should be "close to the people". But people must be particular people; our own people in fact; and national characters helps to bring about this connection, cosmopolitanism destroys it. We like also our music to be progressive in its content—not, God forbid, that every composition should be a Revolutionary March—but that it should be in tune with the life, sufferings, joys and aspirations of the common people. Both these requirements can be met only if the music is closely connected and springs from the folk music of the people. Again, this is not a question of quoting folk tunes on every occasion, or at all, it is a question of what I can only call the idiom, the flavour, the feeling of the music. It cannot have this character of popular connection (in the best sense) without acquiring national character by the same process. Of course, composers learn from the composers of other nations, and are influenced by them. But they must have their own basis.

It is no accident that besides Vaughan Williams, Bartok, Kodaly, Sibelius, Janacek, Shostakovitch all composed more or less consciously in this manner; and what six musicians have had a greater impact on the music of the century? Even Stravinsky, the master of as many diverse styles as Picasso, made use of it at times, though at others he seemed to deny it.

One entirely different point has come up which needs a word. Tom Russell has resurrected the old problem, which is no problem, of how Fascists and Anti-Fascists could both be inspired by the same piece of music. This is no problem if we for a moment manage to remember we are materialists. Music exists because sounds and combinations of sounds have an effect on the material human brain which gives rise to emotions. This is an observed, scientific fact, and it would be a good thing if a lot more of our theorising began from it. Fascists' brains are not *ipso facto* entirely different machines from anti-fascist brains, and the emotions generated by the same piece of music can very well be similar in each. Music unconnected with words, and not specifically imitative in character, gives rise only to the most generalised emotions; hence there is no mystery.

Perhaps the whole discussion should take more account of the *generalised* character of the response of the listener to music. Generalised emotions are no less real than specific ones, so that it involves no retreat from realism. Music with words brings in new problems, but the basis remains. The mystery I would like examined is how it is that music without words can have an equally powerful emotional effect as music with them. I am sure the answer will ultimately be found in a study of the material functioning of the human brain.

### CORRECTION

In the article by A. L. Merson on *Problems of the English Bourgeois Revolution* in the October 1963 issue, the following corrections should be made:

(i) On p. 313, right-hand column, line 9, *1680* should read *1600*.

(ii) On p. 315, left-hand column, 11 lines from bottom, *sentence* should read ". . . it still seems arguable that England in the seventeenth century was only in process of transition from a pre-capitalist society in which petty commodity producers predominated to a capitalist society in which the majority were propertyless servants or almstakers".

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# CHALLENGE OF MARXISM

## A WEEK OF DEBATE AND DISCUSSION

**THURSDAY 14 NOV: CONWAY HALL**

7.30 p.m. "Sociology: Class and Power." **S. Aaronovitch, A. H. Halsey**

**FRIDAY 15 NOV: CAXTON HALL**

York Hall ... 7.30 p.m. "Economics: Problems of Growth." **Maurice Dobb, J. R. Sargent**

**SATURDAY 16 NOV: CAXTON HALL**

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|---|---|---|
| York Hall ... | 10.30 a.m. | "Are There Laws of History?" **E. J. Hobsbawm** |
| Court Room | 10.30 a.m. | "Marxism and Education." **Sam Fisher** |
| Tudor Room | 10.30 a.m. | "The Theatre Today." **A. Van Gyseghem** |
| Kent Room | 10.30 a.m. | "The Modern Novel." **M. Heinemann** |
| York Hall ... | 2.30 p.m. | "The Artist and Society." **A. Kettle, A. Bush** |
| Tudor Room | 2.30 p.m. | "Marxism and Society." **E. V. Rowsell** |
| Kent Room | 2.30 p.m. | "Democracy Viewed Historically." **Lionel Munby** |
| Court Room | 2.30 p.m. | "Music and Nationality." **T. Russell** |

**SUNDAY 17 NOV: ST. PANCRAS TOWN HALL**

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|---|---|---|
| Small Hall ... | 10.30 a.m. | "Modern Trends in Films." **S. Cole** |
| Small Hall ... | 2.30 p.m. | "Philosophy: The Linguistics School." **M. Cornforth** |
| Main Hall ... | 7.30 p.m. | "The Rights of Man" in Folk Song. Ian Campbell Singers, Ewan McColl, Peggy Seeger, Bob Davenport, A. L. Lloyd. |

**MONDAY 18 NOV: CAXTON HALL**

Great Hall ... 7.30 p.m. "The Universe and Life." **J. D. Bernal**

**TUESDAY 19 NOV: CAXTON HALL**

Great Hall ... 7.30 p.m. "The Roots of War and Conditions for Peace." **G. Matthews, Canon Collins**

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PREPARING for the general election, the Tories promise everything tomorrow though they can't do anything today; and Labour proclaims scientific planning without public ownership. Amid promises and schemes, a wise man seeks the truth. So it's handy that we are publishing this month a new revised edition of *Political Economy, a Marxist Textbook* by John Eaton. This is the best and simplest introduction we know of to scientific political economy. (When you have read it, and perhaps attended a study group on it, you will be well equipped to tackle all three volumes of Marx's *Capital:* we have them on sale in a cheap edition printed in the U.S.S.R.)

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